University of Alberta

Growing Loyalty: Post-War Stalinist Education in the Soviet Union, 1945-53

by

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Abstract

Education was a fundamental aspect of the Soviet system, as it ensured the survival of the regime by attempting to produce like-minded individuals. The Soviet education system was an integral part of the communist regime; my thesis explores how mathematical and scientific education was employed by the regime as a means to produce citizens who would maintain and perpetuate the communist system. During the post-war Stalinist period education was of increasing importance because it produced the individuals needed to keep pace with the United States in scientific exploration. The power and prestige of the Soviet Union was at stake in the first years of the Cold War, and educated youth were needed to preserve the regime's status. My thesis connects the process of education in the post-war Stalinist era with the global aims of the Soviet state.

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Introduction

Following the close of the Second World War, the world was thrust into a new conflict. The United States and the Soviet Union emerged as ideologically opposed superpowers that fought to expand their worldly influence at the expense of the other. Both countries employed the widespread use of propaganda in campaigns to gain influence, secure their government's moral authority, and disseminate their particular governmental form to other nations. One of the most successful, yet least studied, forms of propaganda during the Cold War involved education. The Soviet education system was at a formative stage during this period and attempted to prepare the society, especially youth, for the challenges of the emerging Cold War. Education was a fundamental and integral part of the Stalinist regime in many ways. The government used education as a means to produce citizens who would maintain and perpetuate the Communist system. For this reason, Soviet education was not oriented toward individual achievement. In accordance with the Communist model, education was designed as a collective enterprise based on Marxist-Leninist ideology.

My thesis illustrates how Stalinist policies guided the Soviet educational system by studying two of the most important aspects of the Soviet Union's education system: the teaching of morals and morale, and scientific and mathematical education. These two aspects are of particular significance, as the fortitude of the Soviet Union in the first years of the Cold War depended on the educated youth of the country. The education of Soviet youth in the post-war Stalinist era was particularly important for the continued success of the Communist regime. The USSR's need to increase and improve scientific and mathematical education was quickly recognized in the early days of the Soviet

government. In 1928, speaking to the League of Young Communists, Stalin challenged Soviet youth: "Before us stands a fortress. This fortress is science, with its many branches of knowledge. We must capture that fortress at all costs. It is our youth who must capture that fortress, if they want to be the builders of the new life, if they want to be the real successors of the old guard."[1] The American use of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the close of World War II demonstrated the Soviet Union's scientific backwardness in comparison to United States' military technology. Increased education was needed to provide specialist training for the military-industrial complex if the USSR was to compete with the USA. Science and mathematics instruction immediately increased in Soviet classrooms following the Second World War and teachers' magazines were flooded with articles concerning mathematical and scientific pedagogy and their incorporation into labour-related and extracurricular activities for Soviet children. It is my intent to study the effect the Stalinist regime had on the methods and practices employed in classrooms, and the social consequences associated with these changes.

Uchitel'skaia Gazeta (The Teacher's Gazette) is used as the major primary source. This newspaper is an unexplored and underutilized source in Soviet education studies. Very few, if any, articles have been translated into English. Available in select libraries across North America, I have chosen *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta* because it was the most widely accessible teacher's newspaper written in Russian. *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta* provides an excellent basis to discover the regime's intentions relating to education. I have chosen all articles included in this thesis and prepared initial translations.

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[1] William Benton, *The Teachers and the Taught in the USSR.* (New York: Atheneum, 1966), 113 (as cited in J.V. Stalin, *Works* (1954), Vol. 11, p. 81).

Subsequent translation work and editing was completed with the assistance of a native Russian speaker to ensure correctness.

The Teacher's Gazette will be used to illustrate Soviet government objectives relating to education at the beginning of the Cold War. A careful examination of the material presented in *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta* will show how, and for what purpose, the Soviet government intended to link scientific/mathematical education with moral education. These examples will clearly demonstrate the interconnection between moral and mathematical and scientific education and the social and economic benefits the Soviet government believed this association would produce.

Firstly, it must be understood that education in the Soviet Union was a much more comprehensive endeavor than at any time in the history of the United States. The nature of government in the Soviet Union allowed for all aspects of culture and education to be directed at achieving clear goals: the building of Communism and becoming the most powerful nation on earth. When reading about the Soviet education system, one immediately confronts the concept of *vospitanie*. This word has no exact translation in English, but is generally interpreted as either "upbringing" or "moral education." *Vospitanie* was not a school subject per sé in the Soviet Union, but teachers were legislated to saturate their lessons with it. Essentially, moral education, or teachings in Communist morality, was intended to permeate all aspects of the Soviet classroom. To demonstrate the all-encompassing nature of the moral education of a Soviet child, *vospitanie* has been divided by scholars into eleven separate themes: socio-political awareness, morality and ethics, patriotism and internationalism, military-patriotic education, labour education and professional orientation, mental development and the

raising of general culture, atheism, knowledge of law and the obligations of a citizen, and economic, aesthetic and physical education.[2]

It is clear from these eleven themes of moral education, that the maintenance of morale in the Soviet Union was closely tied to the teaching of Communist morality. Pride and confidence in the Communist system of government and the superiority of the Soviet Union were present in a variety of ways. From articles such as "USSR: The Most Democratic State in the World" in *The Teacher's Gazette*, to mathematical problems outlining the inherent falsehoods of capitalism, the Soviet classroom was inundated with the message that the Soviet Union was superior to the United States in every respect.[3]

My thesis demonstrates that the Soviet government inextricably linked mathematical and scientific education with moral education (*vospitanie)* for the purposes of morale building, the perpetuation of the Communist system, and the rejection of capitalism and American influences in Soviet society. Through this process Stalin envisioned the spread of global Communism and an increase in power and prestige for the Soviet Union on the world stage.

Prior to discussing the available literature on Soviet education, it is necessary to provide a short history of the educational heritage of Russia. This introduction provides an essential outline of the basic trends of pre-Soviet and Soviet education and demonstrates the continuities and changes in educational policy over time. It will also be necessary to provide short explanations of historical context, where necessary, to demonstrate connections between educational policy and other important aspects of the

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[2] George Avis, ed., *The Making of the Soviet Citizen: Character Formation and Civic Training in Soviet Education* (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), 2-3.

[3] A. Askerov. "SSSR – Samoe demokraticheskoe gosudarstvo v mire" (USSR – the most democratic state in the world), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 6 December 1947.

Soviet system. Finally, a fundamental portion of the analysis of Soviet educational policy requires a discussion of the American system of education. Primarily, this is because both the USSR and the United States tend to describe their policies regarding education in opposition to one another. Writings by authors from one country disparage the policies in the other. Essentially, one is unable to understand the propaganda and rhetoric of one government without a comparative analysis of the two systems.

Russia's Educational Heritage

In 1726, the first Russian grammar school was founded in emulation of the German gymnasium. However, many wealthy families continued to educate their children at home throughout the tsarist period.[4] By 1914, however, there were 106 400 schools in Russia enrolling 7 800 600 students for the purpose of general education.[5] There had been many changes to education in Russia in the 200 years since the first grammar school opened; specifically a number of prominent nineteenth-century Russian thinkers helped plant the "seeds of the revolution."[6] Petr Tkachev, in particular, foreshadowed the Soviet regime's emphasis on education when he wrote that following a revolution the people would need to be re-educated; he believed this responsibility would fall to the revolutionary organization.[7]

A coherent Bolshevik policy of education began in 1921, as a result of the increasing social stability that emerged with the end of the Civil War. Despite this social

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[4] James Muckle, *A Guide to the Soviet Curriculum: What the Russian Child is Taught in School.* (New York: Croom Helm, 1988.), 1

[5] George S. Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education.* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc. 1957), 15

[6] Ibid. These thinkers include Vissarion Belinsky, Aleksandr Herzen, Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Dobroliubov and Petr Tkachev.

[7] Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education,* 28-29.

stability, the period spanning 1921 to 1931 has been described as the 'Experimental Phase' in Soviet education. For example, grades and matriculation examinations were abolished! Theoretically, Marx's influence becomes clear during this period as many educational writings focus on combining "work with the mind" and "work with the hand."[8] Educational policy was also based on Lenin's writings although his wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, exerted considerable influence even after his death. Schools were to be, "secular, unified, labour oriented and polytechnical."[9] Much of Soviet educational theory stems from the work of Lev Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist, in the 1920s and 1930s. Vygotsky believed that teaching preceded development and that the emotional involvement of the learner was essential to mastering new cognitive tasks; his theories were well suited to the experimental and child-centered practices during the 1920s.[10] Soviet educators also drew from the American theorist John Dewey and experimented with the Dalton Plan.[11] The Dalton Plan advocated increased social responsibility, which tended to suit Soviet policies, but also advocated tailoring the curriculum to each child's specific talents and interests. John Dewey's influence would be quickly repudiated following the end of this 'experimental phase' as a leading American pragmatist's theories would clearly interfere with the rhetoric of a Communist government.

Youth groups that would remain prominent throughout the Soviet era were also organized during this 'experimental' period. The Komsomol, designed for young adults aged fourteen to twenty-eight, was founded in 1918; the Pioneers, for children aged nine

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[8] Ibid.,13.
[9] William W. Brickman and John T. Zepper, *Russian and Soviet Education: 1731 – 1989* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1992), 30.
[10] Thomas S. Popkewitz and Robert B. Tabachnick, "Themes in Current Soviet Curriculum Reform," *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 39, Issue 6 (March 1982), 420.
[11] The Dalton Plan was created by progressive American educator Helen Parkhurst. Parkhurst advocated tailoring instruction to each student's individual needs and interests; she believed that this approach would increase both independence and dependability.

to fourteen was established in 1922, and the Octobrists, a club for children from six to nine was created in 1925.[12] In 1930 the first four years of school were made mandatory for all Soviet children.[13]

Russia had long been perceived by the west as a "backward nation"; the Soviet government was relying on education to bring the country out of this state[14] but the "experimental phase" of Soviet education failed to satisfy this need. By 1926, only 60 percent of Russian children were enrolled in school. [15] The Soviet government intended to use education to complete two tasks: to produce enough highly skilled workers to compete on the world stage, and secondly, to create the "New Soviet Man."[16] Stalin set about reworking the education system to meet these goals. Much about Soviet education changed with Stalin's rise to power. From 1931 onwards, Soviet educational policies moved away from child-centred educational techniques such as the Dalton Plan, and favoured a push for the standardization of textbooks and a renewed emphasis on discipline and concrete knowledge. The traditional five-point grading scale was also reinstated in Soviet classrooms.[17] In 1936, pedology (the science of child development) was labelled an anti-Marxist "pseudo-science" and intelligence testing was banned from schools. If the Soviet government was to prove that it was creating the "New Soviet Man" through education, studies regarding the hereditary nature of intelligence could not be tolerated.

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[12] Brickman and Zepper, 32
[13] Benton, 26-27.
[14] Delbert Long and Roberta Long, *Education in the USSR.* (Bloomington Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1980), 6.
[15] Brickman and Zepper, 30.
[16] Long and Long, 7.
[17] Brickman and Zepper, 34.

The 1930s also saw an increased focus on the qualifications of teachers. E. Thomas Ewing outlines this often controversial process in his article, "Stalinism at Work: Teacher Certification (1936-1939) and Soviet Power." Ewing outlines the governmental campaign, beginning in 1936, to certify all elementary and secondary school teachers. At this time the Communist Party Central Committee announced pay increases and the evaluation of teachers' qualifications; it would become mandatory to possess a teacher's certificate.[18] One might expect, given that the period of certification coincided with the Purges, the purpose of certification was to root out possible counterrevolutionaries. This does not seem to be entirely true according to Ewing.[19] He cites a specific example that illustrates the priority of competence over politics:

> In the case of a teacher named Semenov, accusations that he had fought against Soviet forces were overshadowed by criticisms that this geography teacher with only a third grade education, could not find Iran on a map, and taught children to measure the length of rivers by square kilometres.[20]

The certification process had the desired effect of greatly increasing teacher's enrolment in higher education classes, demonstrating that many teachers deemed it necessary to further their education if they were to continue teaching.[21] Through the process of certification, the Stalinist government was able to convince or coerce teachers into receiving more training; the logical conclusion here is that an increase in job training would result in better teachers in schools, and improved results for students. Through

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[18] E. Thomas Ewing, "Stalinism at Work: Teacher Certification (1936-1939) and Soviet Power," *The Russian Review,* no. 57 (April 1998): 218-219.

[19] Ibid., 225-230. In fact, Ewing notes that the rate of dismissals decreased as the purges were at their height; this suggests that the certification process was designed to be something other than a mass purge of teachers. In addition to this, teachers who were party or Komsomol members were less likely to receive certification. Those who received their certificates were teachers with the most experience.

[20] Ibid., 226-227.

[21] Ibid., 232.

increased enrolment in schools, and likely through better-qualified instructors, by 1939, literacy rates in the Soviet Union hovered around 85 percent.[22]

Prior to a discussion of the major works of the period, let us consider a few of the guiding events of this period to set the stage for an examination of the education system. At the close of the war, tensions emerged between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Yalta treaty essentially divided the European continent into two distinct "spheres of influence": the USA "influenced" Western Europe while the Soviet Union "influenced" Eastern Europe. It soon became clear that these two spheres would pursue very different paths of development based on the encouragement of their respective overseers. At this time the Soviet Union became a charter member of the United Nations and also agreed to join UNESCO. The Soviet government appeared to be reintegrating itself onto the global stage after years of isolation. In many cases the Soviet Union attempted to use these group memberships to solidify its international influence. Over the next four years the United States would introduce the Marshall Plan and form NATO; the USSR would counter these measures with Cominform (1948) and Comecon (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 1949). At the same time that the two countries were solidifying their opposite ideological stances with various decrees and other forms of posturing on the international stage, the USSR was also undergoing major domestic changes. The Fourth (1946-1950) and Fifth (1951-55) Five-Year Plans intended, but fell short of, making the Soviet Union the most technologically and industrially advanced country on earth. The Zhdanovshchina dominated the cultural sphere from 1946 to 1948,

[22] Brickman and Zepper, 35-36.

ensuring that Stalinism was embodied in all areas of culture and education.[23] Academician T.D. Lysenko[24] largely dominated the scientific realm; Lysenko argued against genetics in biology and claimed remarkable successes that he maintained would change the face of Soviet agriculture forever.[25] It is under these conditions that the education system of the Soviet Union focused on the ability of the establishment to produce citizens who were loyal to the regime and the cause of Communism in addition to being well-prepared to enter either an increasingly technical workforce or continue to a higher school for more intense training in the areas of science, mathematics, engineering and other technical vocations.

Historiography

Broadly speaking, published studies of post-war Stalinist education fall into one of two categories: Western or Soviet authorship. This historiographic division is hardly arbitrary since authors predominantly support their respective government's policies. Much of the educational literature is devoted to either discrediting the other's form of government and education system or instilling fears that, without improvements, their country could be overtaken by its enemy. It is remarkable how similar the rhetoric is on

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[23] Andrei Aleksandrovich Zhdanov (1896-1948) joined the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1915. He was appointed a full member of the Central Committee in 1930, and four years later was elected a Secretary of the Central Committee and a member of the Orgburo. A key figure in implementing the Stalin Purges, he became the Communist Party leader in Leningrad after the assassination of Sergei Kirov in 1934. His attacks on progressive culture and art, termed the Zhdanovshchina, ensured that all forms of art and culture supported the Communist regime. Soviet writers, artists and composers were increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. See K.A. Zalessky, *Imperiya Stalina* (Moscow: Veche, 2000), 165-166.

[24] Trofim Denisovich Lysenko (1898-1976), a native of Poltava region in Ukraine was a biologist, academician, and agronomist and a three-time laureate of the Stalin Prize (1941, 1943, and 1949). From 1937 to 1966 he was also a deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and from 1940 to 1965 he was director of the Institute of Genetics, USSR Academy of Sciences. See Zalessky, 285-286.

[25] The natural progression from T.D. Lysenko's work that the Soviet government intended to make was that human beings were products of their environment rather than their genetics. Lysenko argued that characteristics acquired by an organism within their lifetime could be passed on to their offspring. This was extremely important if a "Homo Sovieticus" was to be created; Soviet society, according to this theory, could evolve quickly, with the nature of individuals under a Communist system actually changing as a result of Communist rule.

both sides of the issue. While one cannot dismiss the real fears of a new conflict during this time, it becomes clear that both American and Soviet studies were not solely intended to be objective reviews of the Soviet education system. For Americans these books served as "calls to action" for improving an educational system that was believed to be falling behind the Soviet Union (especially in the training of specialists). For citizens of the Soviet Union, studies of the education system were government propaganda that reinforced the belief that capitalism was inherently evil and emphasized the successes and achievements of Communist methods.

George S. Counts

In the immediate post-war period in the United States, one man stood at the forefront of all American-led studies of the Soviet education system. George S. Counts, American education professor, scholar, former head of the American Teacher's Federation, and Liberal party candidate concerned himself with what he perceived to be the Soviet threat manifested in education, and the dismal American response. Virtually all of the academic literature written during this period (1945-53) concerning Soviet education was written by, or at the very least, contributed to, by George S. Counts. As a result, discussions of period literature must revolve around the writings of Counts.

In 1946, George S. Counts and his research assistant Nucia Lodge set about an ambitious task: to translate the *Soviet Text on Pedagogy*. The purpose of this work was to demonstrate the Communist threat to the American public. In the introduction to the translation Counts writes, "...we must look reality in the face and recognize certain patterns and tendencies in Soviet education and life for what they are – a threat to the

peace and security of the world."[26] Counts prefaces the translation of the text by issuing a warning to the American public: the threat the Soviet Union poses to the United States and the West is both military and moral in nature. This introduction sets the tone for all of Counts' subsequent writings on the education system of the Soviet Union; it is a call to action and a plea to both legislators and the public to take an increasing interest in the education system in the United States from the most important American writer on Soviet education during this period.

Counts begins his preface with a general discussion on how education is viewed in both countries; he states that periods of stress and trouble in the Soviet Union are marked by an increased focus on education. It is implied that this is not the case in the USA.[27] Counts also records that the USSR was spending two to three times more money on education than the United States.[28] These statistics are used to demonstrate the military threat the Soviet Union may pose to the United States in the future as the students of the Soviet Union benefited from the increased attention of their government. Counts wants the reader to see that while American teachers have been leaving the profession in droves as a result of low wages and poor working conditions, the Soviets have been pouring resources into their education system and are now a significant threat to American security. The increased attention to Soviet education also acknowledges the successes of the USSR's system of education.

George Counts outlines the moral threat that the Soviet Union presents. The threat to democracy and freedom is always expounded upon in American writings of the

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[26] Boris Petrovich Yesipov and N.K. Goncharov, *I Want to be Like Stalin: From the Russian Text on Pedagog,* trans. George Counts and Nucia Lodge (New York: The John Day Company, 1947), 31.
[27] Ibid., 14.
[28] Ibid.

Soviet education system. Counts explains, "The history of Soviet education is strewn with the wrecked lives of teachers and educational leaders who for one reason or another found themselves convicted of espousing "counter-revolutionary" doctrines."[29] Counts was likely referring here to former adherents of John Dewy and the Dalton Plan who briefly held favor during the experimental period in Soviet education during the 1920s. Teachers and leaders in Soviet pedagogy who favored these methods were forced to repudiate these methods after 1931 and not a few educational theorists, most notably Alfred Pinkevich, were purged at this time. The Soviet system, specifically its leaders, are often accused of fundamentalism; "In this materialistic religion, "I want to be like Stalin," is the equivalent of "I want to be like Jesus" in the Christian community."[30] These accusations were intended to lend a sense of moral authority and urgency to the educational and political mission of the United States.

George Counts and Nucia Lodge are also the authors of the study of the Soviet Union entitled *The Country of the Blind: The Soviet System of Mind Control.* In the prologue, Counts suggests that this book could have had a variety of different titles that would have been suitable. These included "The Return of the Inquisition," "The Assault Upon the West," and "Heil Stalin!" Eventually, Counts chose *The Country of the Blind* after the H.G. Wells short story where a tribe becomes blind after being cut off from the rest of the world for generations. A young man falls in love with a woman from this tribe and has to choose whether to lose his eyesight through a surgical operation. In the end, he chooses his sight.[31] The parallel that Counts is attempting to make is clear. Counts

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[29] Ibid., 17.
[30] Ibid., 30.
[31] George S. Counts and Nucia Lodge, *The Country of the Blind: The Soviet System of Mind Control* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1949.), ix-x.

writes, "The people of the Soviet Union of course suffer from no physical malady such as afflicted the entire population of the Country of the Blind. Yet the all-inclusive system for the positive molding of the mind, to be abundantly illustrated in the present volume, may well have comparable results in the course of time."[32]

Counts sets about giving the reader a brief history of the party that Lenin created and Stalin controls; he continues to couch his historical analysis of the Bolshevik Party within an agenda intent on spreading fear. For example, speaking of the beginnings of the Bolshevik Party, he writes, "The All-Union Communist Party which threatens to engulf all nations is of complex origin."[33] Counts also describes Russian revolutionaries through the ages as having both, "boundless courage and fanaticism."[34] The author's intention is to demonstrate that Russian revolutionaries and Communists are both irrational and dangerous to the free world; the threat they pose is not only to security, but also to the maintenance of democracy and human dignity worldwide. Counts then makes a powerful accusation. He states that the Bolshevik Party's founding of the "Third International and through the various national parties carried this whole pattern of revolutionary action and morals…into nearly all the countries of the earth. This tragic measure…was probably responsible for bringing Hitler to power…the whole world is now paying for the age-old tyranny and stupidity of Russian absolutism."[35] This statement, made only four years after the end of the war, would have had the desired effect of inciting anger towards the Soviets.

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[32] Ibid., xiv-xv.
[33] Ibid., 2.
[34] Ibid., 8.
[35] Ibid., 23-24.

In order for his message to be taken seriously, Counts needed to demonstrate that the threat the Soviet Union posed to the United States was imminent. He continues with a discussion of the concept of what historians would label as Panslavism or Slavophilism. Counts shows that the Soviet Union should be viewed as dangerous because its policies indicate a desire to expand its influence to other Slavic states and eventually worldwide. This was certainly true; Stalin dreamed of the expansion of Communism and his influence. Counts writes, "Stalin has succeeded in identifying the Marxian Party of Lenin, not only with Russian nationalism, but also with the Slavic sense of mission and high destiny."[36] What is most interesting to the historian is Counts' complete lack of self-awareness. How different were Soviet international aims from the American desire to spread freedom and democracy? Counts laments the difficult position in which a modern democracy is placed; the policies of a democratic government are openly discussed, yet the United States may have no idea what its adversary will do, as the Communist government has the luxury of keeping its policies from the public.[37] Individuals involved in the United States' government are always portrayed as rational, their actions purposeful and benevolent. Soviet officials are therefore described as the antithesis of this; concerning the men in the Politburo, Counts believes that, "their fanaticism, which is complete, is only matched by their ruthlessness."[38]

There is evidence in Counts' study that there may be some level of dissention to his views among the American public. Discussing the change in American-Soviet relations since the end of the war, Counts describes the loss of good will that was present in 1945 and discusses possible reasons for this change. He states,

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[36] Ibid., 30.
[37] Ibid., 34.
[38] Ibid., 37.

> Not a few Americans place the blame squarely on their own Government. They say that Russia was terribly weakened by the war, that the "men of the Kremlin" are badly frightened, and that Soviet policy is motivated wholly by a desire to achieve military security. They say further that the shaping of our foreign policy following the death of Roosevelt fell into the hands of a clique of imperialists composed of military men and representatives of big business who seek world domination in the style of Hitler and regard war with the Soviet Union as both inevitable and desirable. To them what appears to many other Americans as Russian intransigence is merely the natural response on the part of a proud people to the aggressive policies expressed in the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.[39]

Counts then sets about proving his detractors wrong in a chapter titled "The Soviet Apocalypse." Counts describes how Soviet leaders believe in the tenets of historical materialism and the inevitability of the coming of Communism to the whole world. The Soviet government actively pursues this end, and is therefore, to be feared. The author's purpose in this study is to demonstrate that not only is the Soviet form of government oppressive and inherently evil, but that the Soviet government is entirely and solely responsible for the growing tensions between the United States and the USSR. By making the Soviet government responsible for these hostilities, Counts hopes to legitimate any and all responses the American government may take against this aggressive nation hell-bent on destroying the American way of life.

In order to show that the Soviet government could not be trusted in any capacity Counts attempted to demonstrate that the apparent goodwill shown by the Soviet government during the Second World War was nothing more than a strategic decision based on posturing for the future. Counts states that actions taken by the USSR such as the dissolving of the Communist International in May 1943 and the creation in October 1943 of the Council for Russian Orthodox Affairs demonstrated that the Soviet government intended to continue friendly relations with the West into the foreseeable

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[39] Ibid., 43.

future.[40] Counts then details the hardening of the party line toward capitalist countries, especially America, following the end of the war. He cites the reprint of a 1924 Stalinist pamphlet in 1947 in which Stalin advocated the uprising of socialist nations and citizens, "*against* the remaining capitalist world, drawing to itself the oppressed classes of all countries, inciting them to rebellion against the capitalists, and in the case of necessity even moving with armed force against the exploiting classes and their governments."[41] Counts believes that the Allied pullout in Europe left a political vacuum that the Soviets were eager to fill.[42] The insinuation here is that the Americans were naïve in trusting the Soviets who, as soon as they were able, seized as much power as was possible. The Allies were tricked at Yalta into giving up too much influence in Eastern Europe. There seems to be absolutely no acknowledgement that the United States pursued similar ends in Western Europe for the spread of democracy through the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine which sought at first to prevent, and later contain, the spread of communism. There is no recognition of the clear parallel objectives that the two countries had. The reason for this is simple; George Counts is clearly advocating a policy of increased antagonism toward the Soviet Union. In order to do this, it was necessary to prove that the Soviets were a continuing threat to the security of the United States, and that the US had a moral obligation to stop the march of Communism. Counts then rejects the statements made by his detractors at the beginning of the chapter (that the men in Kremlin were scared, and simply protecting their own interests) by stating that, "they are

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[40] Ibid., 50.
[41] Ibid., 62 [as quoted in Stalin, *The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists* (Moscow, January, 1947), 43,46.]
[42] Ibid., 64.

men of action, of violent and ruthless action."[43] Counts believed that the "men in the Kremlin" accepted that the time for the Soviet apocalypse had come, and they were willing to do anything to achieve their ends. Counts trusts that the United States cannot be blamed for any perceived backlash to this unprovoked aggression:

> No democratic statesman should be fooled by the political manoeuvres of the Kremlin. Soviet policies come and go, Soviet tactics change from moment to moment, but Soviet goals are today the same as yesterday, and doubtless will remain the same tomorrow, and perhaps the day after tomorrow. No loyal and wise leader of the free forces of the world will fail to hold ever in mind the guiding star of Soviet policy – the Russian version of the Communist apocalypse.[44]

Throughout the remainder of his study Counts looks at a variety of social institutions that are used by the Soviet government in their system of mind control. The chapter entitled "Education as a Weapon"[45] is of particular interest. Counts describes how all aspects of Soviet life are expected to fulfill an educational function.[46] This was entirely true. A centralized government in any country has the luxury of organizing its institutions to fulfill whatever purpose it deems advantageous. Counts cites the creation in June 1947 of the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge, the purpose of which was to, "explain the most important questions of Marxist-Leninist ideology, to propagandize a materialistic world outlook, and to struggle against all kinds of unscientific views and all the vestiges of foreign ideology persisting in the consciousness of the people."[47] Throughout this study Counts makes clear that he does not support this system of Soviet "mind control," and believes it to be the duty of

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[43] Ibid., 74.
[44] Ibid., 76.
[45] In fact, all the remaining chapters in this study are labeled in this fashion. Chapters are titled, "Music as a Weapon," "Literature as a Weapon," etc. By naming his chapters in this manner Counts makes clear his objective: to demonstrate that all aspects of Soviet life are geared towards the dissemination of Communism worldwide and the defeat of the United States through whatever means necessary.
[46] Counts and Lodge, *The Country of the Blind: The Soviet System of Mind Control,* 244.
[47] Ibid., 246.

the United States to struggle against Communism and the Soviet Union. What is not clear is whether Counts disagrees with the method of "mind control," or merely the message. Without a frank discussion of American propaganda juxtaposed with Soviet examples, it is difficult to see this study as much more than an instrument of propaganda itself. Counts makes absolutely no mention of any form of American propaganda, much less the infamous House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), whose investigations were well under way at this time.

What is most frustrating about George Counts' study of Soviet education is how utterly transparent his motives are; fortunately it also makes them easy to distinguish. In his chapter on education Counts devotes an entire ten pages to printing a speech made by A.G. Kalashnikov, the Minister of Education for the RSFSR, on October 24, 1947. In this speech, Kalashnikov describes the purpose of the Soviet school: "The Party regarded the school, not as a self-enclosed educational institution, but as an educational centre, disseminating Communist ideology and Communist morality outside the school, and above all in the family."[48] Kalashnikov also discusses the state of schooling in the United States. The suggestion made by Counts in his analysis of Kalashnikov's remarks is that the American education system has no underlying goals in the perpetuation of its own system of government, and is devoted solely to educating American youth in mathematics, science, and other school subjects. This is false. All systems of education, whether latently or overtly, assist in teaching morality and values. To argue otherwise seriously discredits George Counts' argument. Of Kalashnikov's speech, Counts writes,

> Here is a highly instructive document for the free world. This report to the Russian people by their minister of education on education in the "bourgeois countries" should be read by every American and by every

[48] Ibid., 264.

> citizen of every free society on the earth. It should not be read of course for the purpose of learning about the condition of education in the United States or any other country mentioned. For such a purpose it is utterly worthless, because it is profoundly false. But it should be of great value to all who wish to see the face of Soviet morality without masks, without veils, and without embellishments, to use the words of Stalin.[49]

Counts' defence of the American system of education in the face of this criticism is lacklustre at best. He states that, "with regard to the status of science in the educational system of the United States the record is clear and unequivocal. Both quantitatively and qualitatively it stands at a higher level than ever before in the history of the country."[50] Yet he does not qualify this statement; much less enter into a discussion of the many shortfalls of the American education system that had been pointed out at this time. Counts glosses over problems in the American school system, such as a lack of teachers and their low rate of pay, by saying that these problems exist, but that they are being addressed. He goes on to say that he knows of, "no instance of an American teacher jumping out of a third-story window of an American consulate in a foreign land to keep from returning to her native country."[51] It is clear from this statement that George Counts had no real intention in entering into a debate on the quality of education in the Soviet Union and the United States. His purpose was to incite fear in the American public and to lend moral and political authority to any action the US would take against the Soviet Union in the future. While it is not my purpose to deny the legitimacy of these fears, it becomes clear that if one is to embark upon a serious study of the Soviet education system, the level of propaganda in studies such as this one must be acknowledged.

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[49] Ibid., 274.
[50] Ibid., 275.
[51] Ibid., 279-280.

George Counts completed one final study dedicated solely to Soviet education. *The Challenge of Soviet Education* sought to warn the American public of the great successes of Soviet education. He believed that Soviet schools were overtaking American schools in terms of technological knowledge and the number of students graduated, yet expressed optimism throughout the study that this increased level of education in the Soviet Union could lead to a people's revolt in the USSR.[52] Counts discusses three specific aspects of Soviet education throughout this book: the political and moral education of youth, and the training of specialists. In the same vein, William Benton, former Assistant Secretary of State and Senator, contributes to American scholarship on Soviet education with his study, *The Teachers and the Taught in the USSR*. This study also includes a preface written by Senator J.W. Fulbright.

In his study, Counts describes the level of propaganda present in the Soviet school system. He outlines how, in the Soviet Union, "Every subject…is regarded as a means to the building of a Communist society and the creation of the 'new man'."[53] To fulfill this task he relies mainly on examples drawn directly from Soviet textbooks. Counts draws the reader's attention to the fact that all textbooks in the Soviet Union must meet party standards, and so-called "stable textbooks" are the only resources available to teachers.[54] Senator Fulbright also discusses the effects of Soviet education on students, stating that, "Soviet dedication to education cannot fail to modify the character of Soviet society."[55]

Counts uses two common examples in Soviet textbooks to draw attention to the all-encompassing control that the government had over the curriculum in the Soviet

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[52] George S. Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc. 1957), 8-9.
[53] Ibid., 82.
[54] Ibid., 96.
[55] Benton, vii.

Union: atheism and the changing accounts of the Second World War. These two examples serve to demonstrate that the USSR was hostile not only to the government of the United States, but also to the Christian values Americans hold dear. Counts uses the example of the Allied landing in Normandy taken from different editions of Soviet history books from 1945 and 1951 to demonstrate growing Soviet antagonism towards the USA. The interpretation of the Allies' campaign moves from a completion of a "brilliantly achieved invasion" in the 1945 edition of the text to being accused of, "delaying in every way the opening of a second front" in the 1951 edition.[56] Juxtaposed to these accounts of Allied participation in the war are the descriptions of the Red Army. The Soviet textbooks state that, "the peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, after being liberated by the Red Army, petitioned the Supreme Soviet through their freely elected representatives for admission into the Soviet Union," and "forever will remain in the memory of the people the image of the Soviet warrior who with his blood, his courage, and his mastery of the military art saved world civilization from catastrophe and destruction."[57] Counts also outlines how atheism was a key part of the political education of Soviet children. He enters into a description of the children's organization "The League of the Young Militant Godless." He describes a math problem from a second grade textbook in 1936:

> Find out how many children in your grade are members of the League of the Young Militant Godless…Draw in your notebooks two columns of squares. One column should represent the godless boys, the other – the girls. Over the diagram write: 'The number of godless in the second grade'. [58]

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[56] Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education,* 97.
[57] Ibid., 98-100. (As cited in A.M. Pankratova, ed., *Istoria SSSR* (Moscow, 1955), Vol II, 404-405.
[58] Ibid., 107. (As cited in N.C. Popova, *Uchebnik arifmetiki dlia nachal'noi shkoly*, pt II (Moscow, 1936), 23.

Counts chooses these two examples carefully. It is clear that the American public would react most negatively towards the Soviet Union given the above examples of a denial of the United States' positive role in World War II, and a rejection of the Christian faith. It is not only the political and moral nature of the Soviet education system that is a threat to the American way of life. William Benton outlines the higher academic standards in Soviet schools compared with their American counterparts, "In his first 'reader' the Soviet child is introduced to easy-to-read but sturdy selections from the Russian masterpieces of literature by such writers as Tolstoy, Pushkin, and Gogol."[59]

George Counts engages in a description of the successes of the Soviet regime in the training of specialists. Counts begins by explaining that in 1915 there were only 50,000 students in Russian technical schools.[60] Instituted in October 1928 the Soviet "Plan of Great Works" called for a 180% increase in state industry, a fourfold increase in oil and machinery production, and a doubling of the amount of pig iron produced.[61] Clearly, there was a need for a dramatic increase in the number of specialists in the Soviet Union if this ambitious goal was to be achieved. By 1932, 394 000 students were enrolled in higher level schools; that number jumped to 1.6 million by 1954.[62] As an added incentive, those continuing their education were exempted temporarily, and often permanently, from military service.[63] These statistics should serve as a dire warning for the American public as George Counts insisted that; "Soviet power rests immediately and in large measure on the vast army of specialists trained in the higher schools."[64] William

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[59] Benton, 33.
[60] Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education,* 156.
[61] Ibid., 161.
[62] Ibid., 164.
[63] Ibid., 167.
[64] Ibid., 178.

Benton believed that the successes of the Soviet education system were the result of students being more motivated to pursue a higher education. Benton insists that this is the case because individual success in the Soviet Union depends on the level of education one attains while in the United States there are more choices that are less "intellectually demanding" so there are fewer incentives to do well in school.[65] The remedy to Soviet power was simple: train more specialists and succeed in making the American education system superior to that of the Soviet Union, and the USSR will cease to be a serious threat.

The Challenge of Soviet Education is a call to action for the American public and legislators. Throughout his study George Counts has illustrated that Soviet technical schools graduate two to three times as many specialists than the United States and that, "In the not too distant future they may reach the goal announced in the famous slogan of the First Five-Year Plan of "overtaking and surpassing the United States of America"."[66] Counts maintains that education will be used to further Communism all over the globe, and that the United States must counter Soviet advances in education to prevent this from occurring. Counts sums up his arguments with a warning, a disturbing prediction, and a clear call to action:

> A century ago, in 1848, the *Communist Manifesto* issued a challenge to modern capitalism in its famous opening lines: "A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Communism..." Today it is no longer a spectre that is haunting Europe. On the contrary, it is thing of flesh and blood, of bone and muscle. It is a thing of great material power fraudulently carrying the Marxian promises of equality, social justice, and economic abundance to all men. But this thing is no longer haunting "old Europe" alone. It is haunting all lands and continents, and even the islands of the sea. It stands by the side and whispers into the ear of every statesman of the free world who refuses to nurture the pleasing illusion that liberty is destined by the nature of man and the laws of the universe to be victorious in the "struggle between two

[65] Benton, 40.
[66] Counts, *The Challenge of Soviet Education,* 291.

> worlds – we and they."...It already holds in thrall one-third of the people of the earth and is pressing forward relentlessly to win the whole of mankind to its standard. Its continued triumphs raise in many a thoughtful mind the question of the viability of the free way of life under the strange conditions of the industrial age – the question of the capacity of free men to summon the moral, intellectual, and spiritual resources necessary to sustain the struggle through both prosperity and adversity.[67]

Counts suggests that the survival of the United States depends on its ability to improve the education of its youth. He desperately attempts to challenge the American belief that, "Education is of course good in some vague way for the individual and for American democracy, but scarcely involves the destiny of the Republic."[68] It is clear from this study that the business of education, particularly technical education involving mathematics and the sciences, is intertwined with the rhetoric and propaganda of both countries. Counts believed that the struggle between good and evil, capitalism and Communism, would be fought on the field of education. Benton takes this argument one step further by specifically calling for a clear educational policy for the entire United States.[69] The message propagated by both authors is clear: higher standards and an increased focus on domestic education would serve as the United States' best defence against the menace of Communism.

Before turning to Soviet interpretations of their education system, it is valuable to discuss one final piece of American literature. Entitled *Decision-Making and American Values in School Administration*, this book is essentially a "how to" for American administrators in education. The book was brought together by a number of leading professors primarily from Columbia University, including George S. Counts. This small volume is important because it makes explicit what actions American teachers and

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[67] Ibid., 286-287.
[68] Ibid., 307.
[69] Benton, 122. At this time curriculum and standards varied widely from state to state and there was really no coherent national educational policy in the United States.

administrators should take in specific situations. In the foreword to the volume the purpose of the book is made clear, "As the tension between the free and slave worlds continues, it is ever clearer that the basic conflict is neither economic nor military. Rather it lies in the realm of moral values. This realization is having one beneficent effect: it is causing free peoples to make explicit the ethical and moral commitments which underlie actions in their societies."[70]

Of particular interest is the case study involving the theoretical discovery of a Communist teacher. Each "problem" in this book takes the form of a case study, with an administrator at the centre of each situation. The administrator is faced with a number of courses of action, there is always considerable pressure placed upon him by the community, and he is forced to make the "right" decision. The authors of the volume outline how administrators should handle each situation in great detail. In the case of the Communist teacher it is suggested:

> But if we conclude, as we must, that a Communist has no right to teach in the schools of a free society, the problem is by no means solved. Because of the conspiratorial nature of Communist operations, it is far from easy to discover the Party member...In combating Communism we must take care lest we adopt its totalitarian methods. Clearly, only those persons should be entrusted with the responsibility of dealing with the problem who are devoted to the ways of freedom and who are able to distinguish a Communist from a Marxist, a socialist, a liberal, a rugged individualist, or someone who believes in the Sermon on the Mount.[71]

It is not expounded upon who has the ability to distinguish a "Marxist from a rugged individualist," etc. One can only assume that they are men similar to those carrying out the activities for HUAC. This volume clearly points out discontinuities in the American version of freedom; they are often very similar to problems within the Soviet Union. To

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[70] Cooperative Program in Educational Administration, Middle Atlantic Region, *Decision-Making and American Values in School Administration* (Columbia University: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1954.), iii.
[71] Ibid., 35.

varying degrees, individuals in both countries were being persecuted for their respective political beliefs. While it is not my purpose to compare the suffering of parties on both sides, it is important to realize that propaganda regarding "freedom" was at the very core of both the American and Soviet governments.

Soviet Writings

Informational pamphlets, educational studies and first-person accounts of Soviet education written during the post-war Stalinist period were heavily controlled and monitored by the government. Published works had to pass strict ideological standards, which resulted in the works available functioning as propaganda of the regime. While American and other Western works may have generally demonstrated an anti-Communist stance, Soviet works were required to support the regime and extreme measures were taken to ensure this. The control of publishing houses and writers' unions gave Stalin and the Communist Party direct control over what the Soviet public was able to read. As a result, I will discuss Soviet works published at this time as a group primarily because each one argues the same points. Speeches by Stalin and Kalinin, first-person accounts from teachers and administrators, and government propaganda pamphlets are virtually indistinguishable in their rhetoric. This will be demonstrated through a short analysis of the Soviet sources available; the reader should quickly identify the link made between Soviet education, nation building, and the importance of scientific and mathematical education in the achievement of state goals. Three specific themes emerge throughout Soviet literature. There is an emphasis on moral education, scientific and mathematical education, and the perpetuation of anti-capitalist sentiment, which is characterized by criticism directed at the American education system.

Education in the Soviet Union was always a much more involved endeavor than it has ever been in Western nations. The moral goals of the system were made known, and teachers were required to fulfill the moral directives of the party. In a speech to leading party workers in Moscow, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin[72] described the purpose of education to those in attendance:

> In my opinion education is the definite, purposeful and systematic influencing of the mind of the person being educated in order to imbue him with the qualities desired by the educator. It seems to me that such a definition broadly covers all that we put into the concept of education, such as instilling a definite world outlook, morality and rules of human intercourse, fashioning definite traits of character and will, habits and tastes, development of definite physical qualities, etc.[73]

It is with these kinds of all-consuming moral and intellectual motives that the Soviet government approached the business of education. As a result, all Soviet literature regarding education is saturated with propaganda. Ivan Novikov's *Notes of a School Principal* is one of the best examples of this. Novikov's analysis of the purpose of education in the Soviet Union combines an attack on the American system of education with the glorification of the moral function of Soviet education:

> Naturally, "education" has not [sic!] the same meaning for everyone. An American writer tells us that one of the educational lights of Los Angeles, Colonel Andrew Copp, once said: "Education is getting a lot of young people into a room, teaching them a lesson out of a book, hearing them recite it, putting down a mark in figures…We are going to have that and nothing else." To us this is the statement of a savage concerning the "education" of savages. That sort of thing isn't education – it is barrackroom drill, an attempt to stultify the brains of the rising generation, to prevent young people from thinking for themselves, to make them submissive slaves of capital. To us, education means moulding the human being, systematically and thoughtfully influencing his mentality and character. There is no

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[72] Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin (1875-1946), born into a peasant family in Tver region joined the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1905, and became a member of the Politburo of the CC CPSU in 1926. During the 1920s he firmly backed Stalin in his battle with Trotsky for control of the party leadership. In January 1938, he was appointed Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. After the war, Stalin arrested Kalinin's wife (Ekaterina Ivanovna Kalinina), but Kalinin remained loyal to his leader, leaving his post for health reasons in March 1946. See Zalessky, 203-204.

[73] Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin. *On Communist Education: Selected Speeches and Articles* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1949), 126.

> question in our minds as to the basic direction of that influence. Our aim is the Communist education of the youth.[74]

With Soviet writings such as these, it is difficult to form an accurate picture of the successes and failures of moral education. However, it is useful in gaining insight into the outcomes that were desired by the Soviet government. It is clear that the Soviet government intended to transform society through the re-education of all youth according to the Communist model.

Soviet schools increasingly focused on mathematical and scientific education following World War II because American technologies, particularly the atomic bomb, revealed that the USSR still had far to go if it was to be the most powerful country on earth. Writings on the teaching of mathematics and science by Soviet authors demonstrate how the party thought this task ought to proceed. Ivan Novikov described how these courses were to be organized:

> The teaching of natural science should be based on Darwin's doctrine, as further developed by Michurin and Lysenko. At history lessons our boys and girls should learn how frequently the West has felt the fruitful influence of the work of Russian scientists and inventors."[75]

Scientific and mathematical education was inextricably bound up with Soviet propaganda. Scientific and mathematical education needed to fulfill a specific purpose: to propel the USSR beyond the United States in the global arms race that was emerging with the Cold War, and to raise the Soviet Union's global prestige. Education was also directly tied to production. An increase in scientific knowledge was necessary to improve the output of Soviet industry. Soviet educational policy focused on raising the number of engineers and technical specialists graduated from higher schools in the USSR. Soviet writers often tied the importance of scientific knowledge with the value of

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[74] Ivan Novikov, *Notes of a School Principal* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1951), 12.
[75] Ibid., 17.

work.[76] The Soviet government needed labourers who would be capable of working with complex technology and who would be active in production for the betterment of Soviet society. It is in this way that Soviet writers demonstrate how intertwined the concepts of scientific and mathematical education were with the moral education of youth.

The Soviet Union often defined itself in opposition to American values and forms of government. Educational propaganda and theory was also an avenue that Soviet writers used to express the government's position on the United States and capitalism in general. The rhetoric surrounding democracy in schools, as well as in government and society, was a recurring theme. Ivan Novikov heralds the democratic nature of the Soviet school and young Communist organizations, "It's not by dance bands or "last-minute hits" that our young school leaders win the honour of election…Soviet schools teach their pupils the right idea of democracy and of how elections should be conducted, which cannot be said of schools in capitalist countries."[77] To increase the morale of Soviet citizens the USSR often proclaimed itself the most advanced country in the world.[78] Soviet educators and specialists in pedagogy were described in the press and in Soviet studies of education as the most progressive element in their field. One Soviet pamphlet explained, "Soviet teachers are putting into practice the lofty ideals of Communist education and are among the foremost fighters for peace throughout the world."[79] It is clear that for all their posturing and proclamations regarding democracy and freedom, writings at this time must be treated as government propaganda. No form of widely

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[76] *Bringing Soviet Schools Still Closer to Life: Full Text of the Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the USSR Council of Ministers on the Question of Strengthening the Ties of the School with Life, and Further Developing the System of Public Education (Soviet Booklet* No. 44, December 1958), 8.

[77] Novikov, *Notes of a School Principal,* 62.

[78] Yesipov and Goncharov, 55.

[79] *Education in the USSR* (Moscow, 1961), 16.

available independent press existed in the Soviet Union and writers were under the control of their unions who answered directly to the Communist Party.

The propaganda present in Soviet writings at this time would generally hinder an investigation into the Soviet education system. However, because I will demonstrate that the Soviet government intended to associate mathematics and science education with moral education for the purposes of morale building, government propaganda, in all its forms, becomes the object of study. Propaganda was necessary in the Communist system for the rejection of capitalism, the spread of Communism, and the rise of the USSR's power and prestige following World War II.

Post-1970 Writings

Before turning to an analysis of the primary source material, there is one final group of writings on Soviet education that will be discussed briefly. I have placed the remainder of literature written on Soviet education after 1970 into one broad category. This is because both American and Soviet writings lose much of their overt propagandistic purposes at this time. Efforts are made to address positive aspects of the Soviet education system, and some authors advocate borrowing a number of Soviet techniques in education and upbringing in general. For these reasons, this final group of writings deserves separate examination.

Perhaps the best-known study on Soviet upbringing and education belongs in this category. Urie Bronfenbrenner's *Two Worlds of Childhood: US and USSR* is a complete study of the Soviet method of childrearing, covering home life in addition to schooling. Bronfenbrenner advocated increased social responsibility for the raising of children in America, borrowing from Soviet techniques, and was a founder of the "Head Start"

program in 1965. Bronfenbrenner's study marks the beginning of a much more balanced approach to the study of Soviet educational practices, though it has its own political purposes. He uses a comparative approach to studying Soviet practices illustrating throughout his study how they differ greatly from American practices.

Bronfenbrenner takes great care in describing upbringing in a collective setting and its effect on children. The great differences he describes between American and Soviet methods of childrearing generally revolve around expectations for children and who is responsible for the actions of children. Bronfenbrenner describes the responsibilities of a grade five student in the Soviet Union:

> ...assist the teacher in setting up visual aids and uncomplicated instructional materials: keep a daily notebook of all work and submit it regularly for examination...during free hours assist classmates with their academic work; participate in getting fuel for heating the school, cleaning up and repairing school property and equipment, removing snow...care for the school garden and for tress and shrubs on the school grounds...cultivate your own garden beds, plant berry bushes and fruit trees, care for them and carry out observations on them; help eliminate agricultural pests...start a home library, systematically repair schoolbooks; etc.[80]

Bronfenbrenner laments that there are fewer "neighbourhood experiences" available to children in post-war America, and blames the withdrawal of the family as the primary agent of socialization for emerging social problems in the United States.[81] For Bronfenbrenner, greater community responsibility for the upbringing of children is needed, and in many ways the Soviet model can be emulated. He states, "Not only does the peer group in the USSR act to support behaviour consistent with the values of adult society, but it also succeeds in inducing its members to take personal initiative and

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[80]Urie Bronfenbrenner, *Two Worlds of Childhood: US and USSR.* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 37-38.
[81] Ibid., 152.

responsibility for developing and maintaining such behaviour in others."[82] Bronfenbrenner does not enter into a discussion of the values of each political system, but his study marks a turning point in educational studies of the Soviet Union. While many authors would remain interested in the moral and political education of Soviet youth, Bronfenbrenner demonstrated there was inherent value in a number of Soviet educational methods.

The remaining studies written about Soviet education will be dealt with as a group. Each study focuses generally on the moral and political education of Soviet schoolchildren based on party directives, and discusses the effects of this kind of "mandated socialization." Many of these studies were intended for teachers and other educational leaders preparing for educational exchanges to view the Soviet system in action. Whatever political position the authors occupy, they agree, "socialization…is at the heart of the entire education process in the Soviet Union."[83]

At this time, a serious discourse regarding Soviet education emerged in the United States. Authors such as James Muckle acknowledged, "A great strength of the Soviet school is that, in concert with the society it serves, it has got across the message to the mass of the population that study and the acquisition of knowledge are a good thing."[84] Muckle also praises Soviet attention to the relationship between society and production, describing how many Soviet youths graduate high school with trade-level qualifications, something that was virtually unheard of in the Western school system.[85] The continuities

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[82] Ibid., 80.
[83] Felicity O'Dell, "Forming Socialist Attitudes Towards Work Among Soviet Schoolchildren," in *The Making of the Soviet Citizen: Character Formation and Civic Training in Soviet Education,* ed. George Avis (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), 80.
[84] Muckle, 182.
[85] Ibid., 44.

between home and school served to reinforce the values of Soviet society. These continuities can be interpreted one of two ways. Some authors, such as Muckle, demonstrate how these methods may lead to a smoother transition between school and work. Expectations in both situations are similar for Soviet men and women. Felicity O'Dell outlined how desired attitudes towards work were taught not only in schools, but were backed up by extracurricular activities, such as near universal membership in Octobrist and Pioneer youth organizations.[86] Later Soviet studies, such as those carried out for UNESCO in 1983 and 1984 portray a less rigid structure of control with the authors describing Soviet teachers as using Marxism-Leninism for theoretical guidance and their own expertise and experiences for practical solutions.[87] The object of the Soviet school remained the same though methods may have varied over time, "The elemental composition of curriculum content...of the socialist school is determined by the goal of the comprehensive development of the personality, which means the acquirement of certain intellectual, moral, political, vocational, aesthetic and physical qualities."[88]

Other authors point out problems within a state-controlled system. Sorrentino and Curcio portray an educational structure full of contradictions: "Truth telling is not the forte of Soviet education. In the structure of values the façade is more important than what stands behind it; a smooth, unbroken surface of acceptance comforts both teacher and pupil, political leader and citizen...Indeed, hypocrisy is taught as a virtue in effect."[89]

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[86] O'Dell, 85.
[87] Ivan D. Zverev, *Teaching Methods in the Soviet School* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983), 7.
[88] V.V. Kraesky and I.Y. Lerner, *The Theory of Curriculum Content in the USSR* (Paris: UNESCO, 1984), 9.
[89] Frank M. Sorrentino and Frances R. Curcio, *Soviet Politics and Education* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1986), 282.

While the motives of the Soviet education system were relatively transparent, it is evident that the outcomes may not have been as clear.

All of the studies concerning Soviet education seem to agree that the purpose of Soviet education was twofold; the system needed to produce enough highly skilled workers to compete on the world stage, and the education system would be fundamental in creating the "new Soviet man."[90] Despite this acknowledgement there seems to be no concerted effort to investigate these two themes as dependent upon one another. Political and moral education has not been studied in the context of scientific and mathematical education. Yet the two are inextricably related. Now that the Soviet Union can be described in finite terms, it is possible to study these forms of propaganda more objectively. My thesis will demonstrate the association between propaganda in political and moral education and the desired outcomes in science and mathematics in the early stages of the Cold War.

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[90] Long and Long, 7.

Chapter 2: Morale Building

The government carefully planned education in the Soviet Union. Every newspaper article, textbook or decree fulfilled a specific function in bringing Soviet society "closer to Communism." The linking of moral education with mathematical and scientific education assisted in the campaign to build Communism. The Communist government made the rationale and objectives of this process unambiguous and widely available in the Soviet press. Through an examination of the implementation and evaluation of this program as it was reported in the Soviet media, one observes a coherent Soviet policy for tying moral education with mathematical and scientific education to strengthen morale.

The underlying principle of Soviet education during the Stalinist period was the cultivation of Communist ideology among youth. It was important for Soviet authorities to put Communism into practice in the factories and collective farms and to ensure the young would be prepared to perpetuate and strengthen this system. Thus, the rationale for linking *vospitanie* with school subjects such as mathematics and science was the "cultivation of the spirit of Soviet patriotism in the younger generation."[91] In fact, Yesipov and Goncharov stated that, "Education in Soviet patriotism is the most important part of moral education."[92]

Morale building in Soviet Union was directly linked to the scientific discoveries and advances of scientists such as Trofim Lysenko and Ivan Michurin. Soviet educational propaganda aimed to dispute the notion of a constant, unchanging morality in society. Instead, Communist officials chose to juxtapose Communist morality with

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[91] Yesipov and Goncharov, 36.
[92] Ibid., 145.

bourgeois morality to demonstrate the evolutionary nature of progress that was possible in Soviet society. An article in the Teacher's Gazette stated,

> You cannot agree with the wide and modern foreign science about moral theory as if progress in the area of morality is impossible because its foundation carries an undying ahistorical and eternal character and has meaning regardless of the character and level of social progress.[93]

Soviet scientists argued that characteristics acquired within a lifetime could be passed to an individual's offspring. The consequences for Soviet society were clear. If moral characteristics could be passed on to offspring, and this fact could be validated by science, the Soviet government could make good on its claim that the very nature of society was being elevated through Communism. The rationale for connecting scientific and mathematical education was to build morale by reinforcing the notion of the superiority of Soviet history, science, and the physical nature of the Soviet people over their capitalist adversaries.

Soviet authorities made their specific objectives for morale building known through moral education. Newspapers were used to report on shortcomings of the system, to give details on advances made, and to encourage citizens to be constantly vigilant against counterrevolutionary forces. The first objective of education in the Soviet Union was to promote Communism. While it may be argued that all education systems at the very least latently promote their respective economic and political systems, the objectives of the Communist Party were made much more explicit in the Soviet Union. In a speech to the Nineteenth Party Congress in 1952, M.A. Suslov,[94] Minister of Culture and Education stated,

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[93] A. Zis', "Moral' burzhuaznaia i moral' kommunisticheskaia" (Bourgeois morals and communist morals) *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 14 September 1946.

[94] Mikhail Andreevich Suslov (1902-1982), born into a peasant family from Saratov region, joined the Communist Party in 1921, and made his career as an ardent foe of Trotskyism and other "deviancies"

> Communist upbringing aims at making all the working people, especially our country's young people, profoundly cultured and educated, cheerful and stalwart, unafraid of difficulties and obstacles, at training them in a socialist attitude to labour and communal property, in ardent Soviet patriotism and proletarian internationalism, in selfless devotion to the great cause of Communism...The guarantee to the entire younger generation in our country of the opportunity to obtain a secondary education signifies a major stage in the solution of the historic task posed by Comrade Stalin: to make all the working people cultured and educated. It also marks a great step in the direction of eliminating the basic distinctions between mental and physical labour.[95]

Scientific and mathematical education played an integral role in the transformation of the Soviet population into one composed of cultured and educated individuals. Scientific education was imperative if the Soviet Union was to progress technologically and the moral nature of scientific and mathematical education in the Soviet Union served to reinforce moral norms in youth. Thus, the objectives of Soviet scientific and mathematical education served both a moral and a technical function. Far from being separated, these two goals were inextricably linked and fed off one another in the context of education.

Morale in the Soviet Union was a constant concern for the government. The Communist Party aimed to project the appearance of a society free from internal conflict to its own citizens and the outside world. Scientific and mathematical education often took centre stage in this procedure. The glorious history of the revolution, the Second World War, and the general struggle for Communism were placed in a scientific context in the Soviet press. If the movement toward Communism followed specific laws and

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during the Purges. From 1941 he was a member of the Central Committee of the party and deputy of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Toward the end of the war he was given extraordinary powers as party chief in Lithuania and organized mass deportations of Lithuanian nationalists to Siberia. . In 1950-54 he was a member of the Presidium of the CC CPSU, removed briefly after Stalin's death, but returned as a permanent member of the ruling group after 1955. Under Brezhnev he was responsible for ideology. See Zalessky, 435-436.

[95] Leo Gruliow, ed., *Current Soviet Policies: The Documentary Record of the Nineteenth Communist Party Congress and the Reorganization after Stalin's Death* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Inc., 1953) [*Pravda*, 13 October 1952, pp 5-6], 203-204.

could be explained through science, the regime was legitimated. In a discussion concerning new history textbooks in the Soviet Union, it was stated:

> A textbook on the history of the USSR must expound in strict chronological sequence and in vivid and interesting form the most important events and facts in the heroic history of the Soviet people. It must contain strictly planned and scientifically substantiated concrete historical material and correct generalizations of historical events "which lead the student to a Marxist understanding of history" (from the decree of the Council of People's Commissars and the Party Central Committee on the teaching of civil history in USSR schools, May 16, 1934). Such a textbook is designed to inculcate in the student high feelings of Soviet patriotism, pride in his socialist motherland and the indomitable desire to become an active builder of Communist society.[96]

The scientific nature of the progression towards Communism is directly associated with morale. The Soviet government depended on Soviet scientists to expound upon the scientific nature of Communism and the many advances in scientific research as a result of the Communist system.

The objectives of scientific and mathematical education in the Soviet Union were made explicit in a number of ways. Often, newspapers would chastise a certain individual's work. Generally, the purpose of these public criticisms was not to challenge someone's work openly. Rather, these criticisms often functioned as a method for dispensing official propaganda. The official "criticism" of A. Pankratova's textbook on the history of the Soviet Union is a case in point.

> There are a number of defects in interpreting the history of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union. The authors of the textbook do not show that the members of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition had different understandings of the purposes of the war and the tasks of postwar organization of the world. The textbook underestimates the role of the USSR in routing imperialist Japan. The authors write: "The entry of the USSR into the war with Japan and the military successes of the Soviet Army speeded up the defeat of imperialist Japan (p. 404). In reality the entry of the Soviet Union into the war in the Far East played

[96]G. Kuzmin, "Questions of History of Soviet Society in a School Textbook" (*Kultura i Zhizn*, 21 July 1950, 3), *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* 16 September 1950, Vol. 2 No. 31, 39.

> the decisive role in liquidating the second centre of world aggression and in winning peace for the peoples of the whole world.[97]

The purpose of this criticism is twofold. It serves as a reminder of the benevolent nature of the Soviet Union. This passage also aims to boost morale by reinforcing the notion that the Soviet Union was the decisive power in the defeat of the Germans and the Japanese in the Second World War. Thus the function of the "criticism" is more to remind citizens of the greatness of the Soviet Union than to level any serious condemnation towards the writers of the textbook. By presenting the Soviet Union as the protector of all free peoples, the stage is set for the claim of the superiority of Soviet science.

The superiority of Soviet science was a constant and recurring theme in Soviet educational newspapers and textbooks; science and scientific discoveries carried a special significance in the USSR. The rational and scientific nature of Communist ideology was constantly stressed in educational writings. From this, it seems clear that a completely rational and scientifically based society must overtake capitalist countries whose social order is based on bourgeois morality and the mysticism of religion. The superiority of science within the Soviet Union is a logical and necessary step in the betterment of society and the intellectual, physical, and spiritual development of its members. To admit the shortcomings of Soviet scientists and their often-dubious discoveries would be to acknowledge the deficiencies of the Communist system.

In a society where the rationale, objectives, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies are controlled by one organization, little is left to chance. All forms of media and information dispensed support state directives. Continued support of the

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[97] A.M. Pankratova, ed., *Istoria SSSR*. Vol II. (History of the USSR). (Moscow, 1955), 404.

Communist regime and training in what was termed "ideological education" was of constant concern in the Soviet Union. On this subject, the Minister of Higher Education S.V. Kaftanov[98] wrote in 1951,

> Further improvements in the scientific level of teaching and in the quality of training new cadres of specialists are of particular significance for the Soviet higher school at the present time. Higher education has worked hard to perfect academic syllabuses and curricula. Several hundred titles of new textbooks on the most important branches of science and technology have been published, and particular attention has been paid to the ideological orientation of teaching, the eradication of outworn and pseudoscientific theories and full reflection in teaching of the achievements of our country's science.[99]

It is clear that an important object of the Soviet system of education was the building and maintenance of morale. This was achieved in the education system through the glorification of Soviet science and scientists and the portrayal of the Soviet system as rational and scientific. The status of these two objectives was closely monitored by the state. The government attempted to ensure success in educational endeavours by widely publicizing the rationale and objectives in education alongside constant reminders of how to implement government policies properly and the continual public evaluation of the program's progress.

The implementation of moral education combined with mathematical and scientific education was methodically carried out and carefully overseen by government officials. Speeches, pedagogical textbooks, newspaper articles and editorials all served to reinforce the government's directives. Media outlets reflected official policy on

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[98] Sergei Vasilevich Kaftanov (1905-1978) was born into a working class family of Ekaterinoslav and joined the Communist Party in 1926. From 1937 he was Chairman of the Committee for High School Affairs with the Council of People's Commissars. From 1939 to 1952 he was a Candidate Member of the CC CPSU. During the war he headed the State Defense Committee in the area of science. In October 1946 this committee was transformed into the Ministry of Higher Education of the USSR under Kaftanov's leadership. Zalessky, 213.

[99] S.V. Kaftanov, "Ideological Training of Students," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* Vol. 2 No. 51, 3 February 1951 (*Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 14 December 1950, p. 2), 36.

education; from these varied sources a coherent picture of the multifaceted approach to the combining of moral education with mathematical and scientific education surfaces. An analysis of varied sources will serve to draw these parallels and explore Soviet objectives and how the government expected them to be implemented more fully.

Government directives in the post-war Stalinist period focused on Stalin himself as a great leader and protector of the Soviet people. By the late 1940s the scope had expanded, especially following the release of Stalin's works on linguistics, to portray Stalin as a great philosopher and scientist.

> The present year is rich in outstanding events in our science, which must find reflection in the work of the Soviet school. The discussion on the problems of linguistics and that on basic problems of Pavlov physiology recently held, will without doubt have great influence in raising the level of popular education. Comrade Stalin's brilliant works on linguistics have immense significance for the development of all branches of Soviet science and are a classical example of the creative working out of Marxist-Leninist theory and its application to concrete spheres of knowledge...The results of the discussions on linguistics and physiology will, without doubt, serve to improve the teaching in Soviet schools of language, literature, history, physiology and a number of other courses.[100]

For Stalin to receive praise in a scientific field, however manufactured or coerced, was a demonstration of the growing importance of the business of science in the USSR The increased importance of scientific and mathematical education soon became a government policy involving various apparatuses, all with the goal of overtaking the West in technological achievements. The government sought to build Soviet morale through the linking of moral and scientific education by publicly praising the vigilance and leadership of Stalin on this subject. In a speech to the Nineteenth Party Congress M.A. Suslov proclaimed,

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[100] "Before the New School Year," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. 2 No 32, 23 Sept 1950 (*Pravda,* 8 August 1950), 49.

> Comrades! Comrade Stalin personally pays exceptional attention to all ideological and political work of the Party and to cultural construction. It would be difficult to name a branch of science, culture or the arts, a sector of the ideological front, where the inspiring and guiding role of our great leader and teacher and the beneficent influence of his brilliant ideas are not felt.[101]

Stalin was a leader through his own accomplishments and the attention he and his government paid to the development of science at all levels within the Soviet Union. Soviet citizens were to be proud of their benevolent, intelligent leader.

In the Soviet press, the USSR was portrayed both as "the brightest flame of socialism and democracy, lighting the way for all of humanity to a better future,"[102] and as possessing a political and economic system that made scientific discoveries increasingly possible. Soviet students were to be taught that the socialist system of the USSR allowed more creative freedom than any other country, and that through Communism the very nature of people was being transformed. An article in *The Teacher's Gazette* stated,

> This national activity and high patriotic imagination of the national masses, a presentation of a true democratic form of our society and all the relationships between people within it, acts as a drive for the initiative of the masses, having achieved, ahead of schedule, within four years, the Stalinist five-year plan. Out of this fact, as from the whole history of development of the Soviet state, it is apparent what gigantic constructive steps of creation can be raised and mobilized for creative activity by the Soviet socialist democracy.[103]

The idea of a shift in production capacity and creativity as a result of socialism was reinforced in the school system. Soviet students, like all other citizens of the USSR, were inundated with the message that the Soviet system of government was superior to all others. The concept that Soviet scientific discoveries surpassed those in capitalist

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[101] Gruliow, 205.
[102] Askerov, "*SSSR – samoe demokraticheskoe gosudarstvo v mire.*"
[103] Ibid.

countries was just one way of boosting morale in an attempt to solidify Communist control further and aid in the spread of Communism in Europe following World War II.

Soviet educational propaganda often focused on the lack of educational spending and low educational standards in western schools (as reported by the Soviet press). It was stated in *Pravda* that 60.8 billion rubles were spent on education in the Soviet Union in 1949.[104] The article continued by reporting that, "in contrast, the U.S.A. allotted only one and one-half percent of its national income to popular education, with the result that millions of children suffer from inadequate school buildings and a shortage of teachers. Twenty percent, or 6,000,000 school-age children in the U.S.A. stayed out of school this year."[105] By contrasting the apparent differences in spending between the United States and the Soviet Union, citizens were to be reassured not only of the quality of the education their children were receiving, but also its superiority over capitalist education. The Soviet press never mentioned the difficulties in comparing educational spending and failed to report on the total number of dollars the United States spent on education. Yet, citizens of the USSR were to take solace in the knowledge that peoples in the far-flung regions of their empire were also prospering and attaining new educational heights. *The Teacher's Gazette* reported,

> Having recently visited general Coutts, secretary of the Anglo-Soviet parliamentary committee, extrapolated in his report two facts. Before 1917 only 2% of Kazaks were literate; now within the KSSR only 2% are illiterate. In India before 1917, there was a 9% literacy rate, and now there is 10% literacy rate. Such is the result of "civilized" control of English in India.[106]

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[104] "The Soviet School in a New Upswing," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* 21 June 1950, Vol. 1, No 21, 62 (from *Pravda,* 20 May 1950, 1).
[105] Ibid., 62.
[106] Askerov, "*SSSR – samoe demokraticheskoe gosudarstvo v mire.*"

The superiority of the Soviet system was reinforced through the criticism of a western, imperialist power.

Newspapers such as *The Teacher's Gazette* also reinforced the regime's policy of morale building through less overt forms of propaganda. In an article titled "Contrasts" the newspaper discussed ways of improving knowledge and testing in Soviet schools through comparisons of various student answers to questions in geography. In the Soviet system, students were often tested orally, and received test questions by choosing "tickets" from a table where the student and examiners would be seated. The article recounts a number of students' answers.

> Student M. described well the farming system and transport of the USA, and showed the ugly forms of capitalist competition. The second question on the ticket given to the student was about Greece. Underlining the special geographic location of Greece near one of the main points of imperial resistance – the Middle East, the student discusses the farming system of the country. He finishes his answer with analysis of modern events in Greece including the "help" from the USA…The third student, speaking about the economic areas of China, answered well the question by the assistant having found current knowledge on the civil war, which is inflamed by reactionaries, and imperialists of the United States in China. The answers of the participants of the 9th grade of the 42nd school showed their political literacy. Having absorbed the textbook material they, as a rule, expanded their answers with the latest events from journals and newspapers, attempting to reach, as they call it here, "up to yesterday's newspaper." An interest in politics was developed in them due to the continuous encouragement of their geography teacher Ludmila Fedorovna Lisovskaya.[107]

The purpose of these answers is twofold. They serve to demonstrate the high level of political literacy of the Soviet student; and they act to reinforce propaganda about the evils of capitalism. Students and teachers were provided with a model for an appropriate response to two current international situations while bolstering support for the Communist regime and the international spread of Communism.

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[107]D. Leshchinskii, "Kontrasty" (Contrasts), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 7 June 1947.

Calls to improve education in the Soviet Union were continuously presented with a sense of urgency. There were several reasons for presenting directives in this manner. Firstly, the regime played upon the idea of Communism as a "struggle" and a "battle." The mission of educational reform appeared vital and pressing; it was an issue that required the immediate attention and action of all citizens. In addition, this "battle rhetoric" also lent itself to many "mission accomplished" speeches designed to boost the morale of Soviet citizens. The connection between moral and mathematical/scientific education was implemented through revamped textbooks that focussed on the achievements of Soviet science and strict vigilance in the ideological education of students.

> The scientific-theoretical standard of teaching and the ideological-political education of the students must be improved. The Ministry of Education of the Russian Republic is concluding work on improving present programs. Programs for literature and geography have been basically changed. The U.S.S.R Council of Ministers' decree on textbook publication provides for publication of 100,000,000 copies in the Russian Republic. By August 1, 70 % of these books must be available. Of the books published by the Educational Publishing House, 17 have been rewritten and about 50 have been thoroughly revised. The schools will receive new textbooks in botany, zoology, anatomy and human physiology on the principles of Darwinism and on the basis of Michurinist biology…Exemplary preparation for the school year is essential to successful education of the future builders of Communism.[108]

Students were prepared and trained not only in theories of science and mathematics approved by the government, but participated in training designed to put their knowledge into practice. The geography classroom served as an opportunity to augment students' military preparedness. Students were trained to use a compass and read military maps; they were also schooled in the weapons used by the Red Army.[109] Yesipov and Goncharov explain the logic for this type of training, "It is necessary to learn, not only to

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[108] "The Soviet School in a New Upswing," 62-63.
[109] Yesipov and Goncharov, 69.

hate the enemy, but also to struggle with him, in time to unmask him, and finally, if he does not surrender, to destroy him."[110]

The implementation of Soviet educational policies was a serious matter for the government. Propaganda campaigns were launched to ensure that directives were carried out with vigor and in a timely fashion. Soviet advances in science were a source of pride for the citizens of the USSR. This sense of pride was not spontaneous; it was carefully manipulated by the government through the implementation of a curriculum that focused on the great achievements of Soviet scientists and mathematicians. The connection between morale building and scientific and mathematical education was an important one for the ruling party. The Communist government still sought approval from its citizens and recognition from the international community. All governments, no matter how authoritarian, must rely on popular support to a certain degree. The Communist government hoped that moral education in the classroom would ensure obedience and high levels of production for generations to come.

As with any government policy, its relative success or failure was evaluated. In the Soviet Union, the evaluation of educational progress was a very public event. The appraisal of morale among citizens, particularly teachers, was a large part of this process. Public criticism and praise played a decisive role in the development of curriculum and the reinforcing of government directives. By examining the public evaluation of morale building, shifts in policy can be seen, and the nature of Soviet educational objectives is more clearly revealed.

A common method for evaluating the success of an educational policy in the Soviet Union was through the printing of editorials and testimonials written by teachers

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[110] Ibid., 62.

themselves. The purpose of these articles was often to criticize publicly teachers for leaving their moral duties to students unfulfilled. Pointed criticisms would be leveled, with the author always mindful to characterize these failings as mistakes of a small percentage of teachers. The government hoped to keep teachers vigilant of colleagues' behavior, and reminded each teacher of her responsibilities to the Communist government. In an article titled, "The Moral Weight of Teachers," a young female teacher describes her frustration regarding some of the behaviors of her colleagues.

> "I thought that I would find in the school a friendly collective of tightly knit group of people, living with multifaceted and great interests, free of prejudices and delusions, standing above the general crowd. My hopes did not completely materialize...they do not much impress me with their inner lives, general culture, and their open mindedness. They have a highly increased and unnatural interest in various types of savoury 'events' worthy of the attention of narrow-minded and gossiping people, but not a truly cultured person. I often wonder which of our students, dreaming of a great human ideal, will take such a teacher as an example. Perhaps no one." What was said in this letter is not typical of our teachers, yet it is also not an isolated event. It cannot be denied that among teachers, now and then, there can be found a person with outdated and false views on life, old habits, limited interests, antisocial psychology, people in the psyche of which there are still strong remnants of capitalism.[111]

The message in this article is clear. Teachers are to be the leaders in society; they should exhibit and perpetuate all the characteristics of a good, Communist citizen. Narrow-minded, petty and egotistical endeavors that are the remnants of capitalism in society must be rooted out. Of particular concern to Soviet authorities was the continuing problem of religion. Despite the government's best attempts to suppress Russian Orthodoxy prior to World War II, many continued to practice various religious rituals. In fact, during the war, religious services were permitted and the Russian Orthodox Church supported the Soviet war effort. Many churches were opened within the Soviet Union;

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[111] I. Zborovskii, *"Moralnyi ves uchitelia"* (The moral weight of teachers), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 1 September 1949.

Stalin believed that during times of war spirituality was acceptable on some level, especially since the church was supportive of his wartime program. Yet following the Great Patriotic War, the government quickly returned to its staunchly atheist position. This article is characteristic of government propaganda urging an official return to atheism. The author of the article questions his readers, "imagine a teacher who today participated in the prayer for rain and tomorrow has to answer a question by a student: where does rain come from? A teacher is required to give a true, scientific answer to the question. But will this answer be truthful to him?"[112]

Morality was a battleground for the government of the Soviet Union. Military successes could be attributed to it, scientific successes and failures depended upon on it, and the content of Communist society was determined by it. Thus, teachings in morality became very important in the USSR. Specific curricula were developed to teach "Communist morality" integrated into each and every school subject. *The Teacher's Gazette* records the importance of teachings in Communist morality:

> In modern times the form of educating the youth in a fascist manner has been transferred over to Anglo-American imperialists. The bourgeoisie forces into the consciousness of people the thinking that to achieve their own selfish needs and wants no means should be spared. The imperialist thinking is obvious; they are teaching the young people to pursue higher wages, to fight future wars, to teach vicious and submissive servants of their vile war schemes, and misguided conquering plans. To the false and misguided morality of the bourgeoisie there stands the Communist morality, which is the most noble and progressive morality of human society... The content of Communist morality in our society is defined by the goals of the Great October socialist revolution. It is presented most of all in the ideas of Soviet patriotism, in the socialist relation to labour and public property, in the battle with the suffering of the past, in a steady progress towards Communism. In the love of the Soviet people towards their Native Land, in a creative Soviet patriotism, Communist morality finds its most active presentation. During the Great Patriotic War, when an enemy threatened our people with slavery, Soviet patriots truly raised

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[112] Ibid.

> their moral norms to the highest level. They showed such heroism that was unknown in the history of humanity.[113]

The Soviet Union considered moral authority to be a part of the struggle to elevate its status above Western powers on the world stage. The moral authority to govern and to affect other nations was an issue of great concern for both the United States and the Soviet Union. Along with morality, arguments arose concerning the true meaning of freedom and which political system (Capitalism or Communism) embodied the concept most fully. The education of youth had an important role to play in the battle for which country's citizens were the "most free" and "morally sound." The Communist government had a vested interest in making the children of the empire believe that they had the citizens of the world's best interests at heart. It legitimized suppressing rebellions of counterrevolutionaries and supporting far-off insurgencies. Perhaps most importantly, the high level of Communist morality made sacrificing personal freedoms and consumer goods acceptable and necessary for many Soviet citizens.

To evaluate the successes of moral education in schools, the government reported results of various studies in the media. Propaganda regarding Soviet achievements was commonplace. The Soviet government often reported on specific essay topics and responses given by students. In these cases the topic was likely to be related to freedoms enjoyed by Soviet citizens, the superiority of the Communist system, or heroes of the Soviet Union, past and present. This gave the regime the opportunity to remind citizens what acceptable behaviour entailed, and who appropriate heroes were. These "exposés" demonstrated what characteristics were valuable in an upstanding citizen, and reminded citizens of their moral responsibilities while heralding the successes of the Soviet Union.

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[113]F. Shunitkov, "O moralnykh normakh" (About moral norms), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 16 June 1949.

Published in 1949, an article titled, "Heroes of Soviet Secondary School Students" asked grade eight to ten students in the Uzbek republic to explore the subject of their personal heroes. The article ranks the frequency of specific individuals appearing in the students' essays. The results are far from surprising.

> The names of the great leaders of the working class – Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin – hold first place. Then follow the names of common people who distinguished themselves on the battlefields of the great patriotic war and behind the lines – outstanding commanders and enlisted men of the Soviet Army, great scientists, authors, artists of our country and young Soviet men and women who displayed courage and performed heroic deeds.[114]

Perhaps more valuable is the advice for teachers when a student chooses a hero who is deemed unsuitable.

> The task of the teacher clearly is to strengthen the positive, high ideals in the minds of his pupils and make them into an active and powerful stimulus of development. In those cases where individual students selected heroes who do not correspond to the requirement of Soviet ideology and morality…the task of the teacher is patiently, tactfully, but convincingly and persistently to clarify the mistake and to use all educational means available to help the Soviet student find an ideal worthy of himself. [115]

Part of building morale in the Soviet Union revolved around individuals taking pride in the collective nature of their society. To ask a child to choose an individual hero in a society that values collectivism could prove problematic. The message the government conveyed to teachers was that individual heroes were appropriate only if they were collectively the heroes of all individual Soviet citizens. The reaction is an example of the regime struggling to reconcile individuality with collectivism. The Soviet Union depended upon the education system to produce scientists who would far surpass their own classmates and researchers in other countries. Yet the government often talked of the integration of manual and mental labour. It was the teachers of the Soviet Union who

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[114] I.M. Krasnobayev, "Heroes of Soviet Secondary School Students." (*Sovetskaya Pedagogika*, April 1949, 72-79) Vol. 1, No. 24, 12 July 1949, 3.
[115] Ibid., 6

were left to explain these inconsistencies while being responsible for inspiring and producing the academics of the next generation.

A basic way for the Soviet government to boost morale among their citizens was to demonstrate the great progress Russia and Union republics had made as a result of the Soviet system. A favoured method in this process was the use of "facts" and "figures." The public was continually bombarded with numbers showing the vast improvements in literacy, number of students educated, and numbers of primary, secondary and postsecondary schools across the USSR. Particular attention was paid to the great advancements made by peoples in the Eastern republics; with literacy numbers implying that these cultures entered civilization virtually overnight (and as a result of the Soviet system).

> There are now more than 220,000 general educational schools and technicums, instructing 34,500,000 people. Only 7,800,000 students were instructed in all the schools of pre-revolutionary Russia. There is complete literacy in the Soviet Union. This applies as well to those peoples who did not have even their own written language 30 years ago. There were only seven literate people to every 1,000 in pre-revolutionary Yakutia, whereas now there are 993 to every 1,000...The army of 1,300,000 Soviet teachers are in the front ranks of the fighters for cultural progress.[116]

These figures were meant to exhibit the level of commitment of the government to educational needs and reinforced the value placed on education in the Soviet Union. *Pravda* often reported on the level of educational spending in the Soviet Union; in 1950 the citizens of the USSR were informed that of the 120.7 billion rubles spent on the social and cultural needs of the Soviet Union 59.5 billion of these were dedicated to education.[117] In actuality, these figures meant very little. The observant reader will note

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[116] "The Soviet School in a New Upswing," 62.

[117] "Outstanding Victory of Cultural Revolution," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. 2 No 33, 30 September 1950 (*Pravda*, 13 August 1950, 1) 52.

that according to the above-mentioned numbers, the USSR actually spent less on education in 1950 than it did in 1949. The purpose of reporting literacy rates, and state spending was to show the benefits of the Soviet system and the compassionate nature of the government.

Following the Second World War it was difficult for the Soviet government to deny completely scientific advances in the west. Instead, the government unleashed a campaign of propaganda that aimed to educate Soviet citizens on the differences between capitalist and Communist scientists and the scientific discoveries each group made. The Communist government aimed to show that Soviet scientific discoveries were superior to those in the west. When this could not be demonstrated, as in the case of the atomic bomb, the government focused on the benevolent uses of atomic energy in the Soviet Union as opposed to the Americans whose use of atomic energy focused on beginning a new world war. While capitalist countries such as the United States could boast technological progress, the Soviet government contended that this progress would be aimed at the continued exploitation of the working class. Soviet discoveries, on the other hand, functioned to further the advance of Communism.

> Stalin is the inspirer and friend of Soviet scholars. One of the indices of the powerful technological progress of USSR science is the mastery of the secret of atomic energy, achieved in a short period. Under capitalist conditions, all discoveries of science and technology are a weapon for intensifying exploitation, enslavement and annihilation of peoples. In the hands of Soviet people the discoveries of science, including atomic energy, serve as a mighty means of technological progress, assuring the further advance of our country toward Communism.[118]

The Soviet authorities aimed to boost the morale of their citizens by demonstrating the Communist system to be intellectually and morally superior to capitalism.

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[118] S. Kaftanov, "Stalin's Concern for an Upswing in Socialist Culture," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* Vol. 1, No. 51, 17 January 1950 (*Izvestia*, 16 December 1949, 2), 49.

Perhaps the most telling and obvious manner to reveal the interrelation between scientific and moral education for the purpose of morale building is through the textbooks used in Soviet classrooms. The publication of textbooks in the Soviet Union was often a very public event. In 1950 the Soviet journal *Voprosy Istorii* dedicated forty pages to the publication of an outline for a textbook on the history of the USSR. Over several weeks, this article was reprinted in its entirety in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, indicating that the material was thought to be important for western readers as well. The article reads as an outline specifying exactly what is to be taught in the history classroom. It is written in point form, though all the major events in the history of the Soviet Union are touched upon. The relationship between scientific achievements and morale is immediately apparent.

> Triumph of Stalinist military science. Brilliant victory of Soviet troops at Stalingrad, clear evidence of superiority of "Stalinist strategy and Stalinist leadership and tactics over the strategy, leadership and tactics of the Germans." (Bulganin)...Session of Academy of Agricultural Sciences (August, 1948). Academician Lysenko's report on the situation in biology. Struggle against servility toward bourgeois culture of the West. The new advance in science and culture. Soviet scientists master secret of the atomic weapon.[119]

Soviet scientists and their discoveries were characterized as "practical" by the Soviet media. The government propaganda machine attempted to remove any perceived differences between mental and physical labour. This is in large part why scientists such as Lysenko were so prominent during the Stalinist period; they were portrayed as ordinary citizens making extraordinary discoveries for the union. The outline of the textbook on the history of the USSR states, in point form, how this material is to be approached in schools:

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[119] "Outline of a Textbook on History of the USSR," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* Vol. 3 No. 5, 17 March 1951 (*Voprosy Istorii*, No 7 (July 1950): 61-108), 10-12.

> Indivisible ties between the work of Soviet scientists and practical tasks of socialist construction. Priority of Soviet science in major discoveries in physics, chemistry, biology, geology, aviation and other fields of science. Pavlov's struggle against idealism in physiology and psychology. Development of the Soviet school in biology. [120]

Soviet scientific discoveries and military victories were characterized as brilliant, with victorious outcomes the result of Stalinist leadership and demonstrative of the triumphant struggle for Communism against the evils of capitalism. The focus on scientific discoveries and the "scientific nature" of military victories by the Soviet press served to reinforce the idea of Communism as a science and proved the regime was fulfilling the tenets of Marxism-Leninism.

In order to build morale and give the appearance of a state composed of separate nations joining together of their own free will, the Soviet press was not averse to the blatant fabrication of facts. For the Soviet government following World War II it was necessary to provide the appearance of a united front. The media portrayed states that had been taken over by force by the Soviets, or those who now found themselves in the Soviet "sphere of influence," as having chosen this fate. It was important for the Soviet government to demonstrate to the world that it had the moral authority to govern and affect policy outside its immediate borders. An outline of a history textbook of the USSR details how the Soviet invasion of Poland and the subsequent takeover of the Baltic republics should be taught in Soviet schools.

> Fascist Germany Attacks Poland. Outbreak of second world war…Liberation campaign of Soviet Army. Uniting of Western Ukraine with Ukrainian Republic and Western Belorussia with Belorussian Republic…Entry into USSR of Soviet Baltic Republics – Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Liquidation there of bourgeois-landlord regime. The USSR, a union of 16 republics.[121]

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[120] Ibid., 10.
[121] "Outline of a Textbook on History of the USSR," 8.

The Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, which led to the invasion of Poland by Germany, was deliberately omitted from the text, as was the Soviet "incorporation" of the Baltic States into their growing empire.

Students of the Soviet Union were presented with a clear message; the Soviet Union is the most scientifically and technologically advanced country in the world. Its government is benevolent in its actions towards its own people and others, and is the true purveyor of democracy in the modern world. The combining of scientific/mathematical education with *vospitanie* played a significant role in this practice. From the excerpts above one must conclude that public perception of scientific progress was important for the continued success of the Soviet government and the confidence the public held in it. An effective way to instil confidence in the regime and teach young people what was expected of them as adults in a Communist system was to incorporate these teachings and expectations into daily life and lessons in schools. Teachers were responsible for correctly interpreting world events with the assistance of Soviet-produced, government-mandated textbooks. The clear and unambiguous advantages Soviet citizens and scientists held over their counterparts in capitalist countries were to be stressed as a way to boost morale and foster a sense of national pride in home-grown intellectuals.

Chapter 3: The Rejection of Capitalism

One of the most important functions of the Soviet education system was to reject explicitly capitalist and bourgeois influences in all areas of Soviet life. The school provided a captive audience of young people who were to be taught the benefits of Communism contrasted with the evils of capitalism. Official textbooks, government pronouncements, and newspaper articles directed at teachers and citizens concerned with the education of youth in the Soviet Union were explicitly focused on the rejection of all western and capitalist influences. The government directed an enormous amount of energy to this project. The rationale behind this mission was to create a group of young people who accepted the Communist way of life and would be willing to sacrifice material gain and carry on a constant struggle against capitalist forces worldwide.

Soviet citizens were constantly reminded of the dangers capitalist nations posed to the stability of the fragile peace that had been established following World War II. By portraying western nations as imperialist warmongers, the government of the Soviet Union hoped to renew suspicion and mistrust of the West in its citizens. M.A. Suslov reminded his colleagues of the danger capitalist nations posed to the Soviet Union in a speech to the Nineteenth Party Congress in 1952:

> Above all, we cannot forget the capitalist encirclement, headed at present by the most reactionary imperialist circles of the U.S.A. and Britain, who are carrying on preparations – including ideological preparation – for a new world war, employing all the means of bourgeois culture and ideology to stupefy the broad masses in their own countries and to poison with the venom of the most base and crafty falsehood and slander the minds of certain less stable elements in our society.[122]

Capitalism was to be rejected because it was harmful to workers and to all peaceful nations such as the USSR. The rejection of capitalist influences in the Soviet Union was

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[122]Gruliow, 203-204.

also to have a moral tone. The combination of economic and moral attacks against capitalism dismissed the economic power the United States held, and undermined the perception that the U.S.A. somehow had the moral authority to govern and influence policy beyond its borders. Ultimately, this was the end that both the Soviet Union and the United States intended to achieve.

Soviet propaganda directed at teachers and students aimed to demonstrate the moral bankruptcy of the capitalist system and the United States as a political entity and connect this goal directly to the curricula used in Soviet schools. Yesipov and Goncharov described the unethical nature of capitalist systems.

> The ruling ethics in society is the ethics of the ruling class. Wealthy classes, as Lenin says, regard their morality as the morality of all mankind and founded on "the commandments of god..." we say that it is a fraud, that it is a deception designed to dull the minds of workers and peasants in the interests of landlords and capitalists.[123]

In response to the ethics of capitalism, the authors described what needed to be taught in Soviet schools to overcome this problem.

> We need a generation of youth transformed into responsible people by the conditions attending a disciplined and desperate struggle with the bourgeoisie...to this struggle must be subjected and with this struggle must be linked every step in the education of youth.[124]

One of the most effective means of propaganda the Soviet government had at its disposal was that of contrast. In order to demonstrate the benevolence of Soviet educational policy, the American education system, and its constant failings, were placed side-by-side with the far superior Soviet system. Everything about Soviet and American education system was presented as being in direct opposition to each another. Whereas the Soviet system was efficient, the American system was inefficient. If the Soviet system produced

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[123] Yesipov and Goncharov, 141.
[124] Ibid., 142.

critically thinking youngsters, the American system produced capitalist drones. The examples of the use of contrast in Soviet education are far too numerous to count, and were intended to reinforce notions of Soviet superiority in educational, cultural, and economic policy. It also reminded Soviet citizens of the main objective of education in the Soviet Union: the perpetuation of the Communist system and the explicit rejection of all capitalist and bourgeois influences. Ivan Novikov's *Notes of a School Principal* (1951) was a clear piece of educational propaganda that aimed to capitalize upon and exploit the perceived failings of the American school system by contrasting it to the far superior Soviet method of teaching. The author juxtaposed the purpose of schooling in the two nations to achieve the desired effect.

> Naturally, "education" has not the same meaning for everyone. An American writer tells us that one of the educational lights of Los Angeles, Colonel Andrew Copp, once said: "Education is getting a lot of young people into a room, teaching them a lesson out of a book, hearing them recite it, putting down a mark in figures...We are going to have that and nothing else." To us this is the statement of a savage concerning the "education" of savages. That sort of thing isn't education – it is barrackroom drill, an attempt to stultify the brains of the rising generation, to prevent young people from thinking for themselves, to make them submissive slaves of capital. To us, education means moulding the human being, systematically and thoughtfully influencing his mentality and character. There is no question in our minds as to the basic direction of that influence. Our aim is the Communist education of the youth.[125]

Through this excerpt, one can see the clear objective of the Soviet system; the Communist education of all youth, contrasted with an American school system that was portrayed as morally corrupt and focused on producing mechanical soldiers of capitalism.

In order to fulfill the objective of the wholesale rejection of capitalist and American influences in Soviet society, the Soviet education system and its supporting foundations were inundated with propaganda that intended to achieve this end. The

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[125] Novikov, 12.

implementation of anti-American propaganda in education had several specific characteristics that aimed to eliminate remaining capitalist or bourgeois tendencies in the population. The government of the Soviet Union ruled over a diverse and sometimes uncooperative group of republics. To ensure order the government dispensed propaganda that reinforced the regime's political, educational and moral goals. Soviet educational propaganda focused on the desperate and dire circumstances of the American educator, the chronic under-spending and structural problems that existed within the American school system, the general societal bankruptcy of the West, and America in particular, and the superiority of the methods and function of the Soviet education system. Each of these aspects of Soviet propaganda will be discussed here, with the intent of explaining how specific messages from the Soviet government pertaining to education served the ultimate goal of emancipating the Soviet people from capitalist and bourgeois influences.

Propaganda relating to the poor conditions the American teacher experienced was particularly popular in the Soviet press. Poor wages and general conditions of teachers, the low level of societal respect for the profession, the operation of the American school as a business, the need for unionization in the profession, and the effect of these faults and deficiencies on students in the United States were common themes in Soviet educational propaganda. Each of these aspects and their goals relating to Soviet educational propaganda will be discussed further.

The purpose of educational propaganda in the Soviet Union that lamented poor wages and conditions of the American teacher had a number of goals. Firstly, it aimed to convince Soviet teachers that their situation was infinitely better than their American counterparts. This type of propaganda also functioned to reinforce the level of

importance education maintained in Soviet society by demonstrating the lack of respect for teachers in America. By presenting the apparent American indifference to improving education, the Soviet government further demonized the United States. A lack of concern for the education of a country's youth, which was a primary focus of the Soviet Union, reinforced the superiority of Communist principles.

Articles in the Soviet education journal *The Teacher's Gazette* often reported on the low wages and poor conditions that teachers in the United States experienced. Low wages for American teachers and the subsequent shortage of teachers was often blamed in the Soviet press on the inadequacies of the American education system. An article printed in 1948 titled "About the American Tradition of Under-spending of Education and the State of Teachers in the USA" recounted that,

> The main reason for the low standards of primary education within the country is the low wages of teachers and the massive shortage of teachers as a result. In the country there is a shortage of 150 000 teachers, yet at the same time only 10 000 new teachers will graduate this year. During the meeting they spoke of the need to raise the wages to twice their current level. The National Association of Education in their report points out that schools are overfilled and the teachers are overloaded beyond reasonable limits. Because of this about two million children are denied the opportunity for normal education. [126]

The situation of teachers in the United States was presented as so dire and appalling that the wage received by a teacher did not come close to approaching what would be considered a living wage. *The Teacher's Gazette* reported that, "Right now in many states the teacher's wage…is equal to the wage of a janitor or a paperboy."[127] Drawing on the reports of American educational reporter Fred Hechinger the article continued by explaining that, "The median yearly salary of teachers in various states fluctuates

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[126]L. Topchii, *"Ob Amerikanskoi 'traditsii' ekonomit' na obpazovanii i o polozhenii uchitel'stva v S.Sh.A"* (About the American tradition of under-spending on education and the state of teachers in the USA), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 4 March 1948.

[127]Ia. Gushchin, *"Iznanka Amerikanskoi sistemy prosveshchenuia"* (The seamy side of the American system of education), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 24 May 1947.

between a scandalous $650 in Mississippi to $2700 in New York." (Hechinger) "The strike in Buffalo shows that even the highest number is not sufficient to cover minimum living requirements of an American teacher."[128] Perhaps the most damning statement regarding the circumstances of American teachers reportedly came from Ellen Moore, described by *The Teacher's Gazette* as being the president of a teacher's organization in Idaho, when she stated that, "Teachers would be better off as farm laborers."[129] By "proving" that the government of the United States had no concern for the plight of teachers, the Soviet press aimed to show a lack of interest in the education of American youth and the low priority education occupied in the United States. This was to be contrasted at all times to the far superior conditions of the Soviet teacher, the benevolence of their government, and the high level of priority education and the youth of the country enjoyed. Shortcomings of the Soviet system, such as lack of infrastructure, shortages of teachers and textbooks, and rampant cheating among Soviet students were not discussed.

Soviet educational propaganda often focused on the low level of societal respect for teachers in the United States. Education in the Soviet Union was a primary concern for government and citizens. Many important milestones in Soviet society were related to education; school was a serious business. Government leaders and private citizens recognized the importance of education for the betterment of Soviet society and citizens' private lives. In a system where monetary wealth was not supposed to control social status, education became an assured way to improve social standing in the Soviet Union.

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[128] Ibid.
[129] M. Nekrich,"Despotia biznesa" (The despotism of business), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 7 May 1947.

In this system, teachers were often revered as the moral and intellectual leaders of society, providing a path to a better life for their students.

An article in *The Teacher's Gazette* stated that in the United States, "The wages of the teachers are so low that people are ashamed to become teachers."[130] For any individual in the Soviet Union to be ashamed of becoming a teacher would be unthinkable. The impact of this statement is twofold; it should be viewed as shameful (by Soviet citizens) that a job as important as that of a teacher is so poorly paid in the United States and that a person who works an honorable, full-time job does not receive a living wage demonstrates an inherent flaw of the capitalist system. These facts, as presented to Soviet teachers through carefully controlled media outlets, should encourage teachers to reject all American and capitalist influences and to espouse proper Soviet views in lessons to their students. The objection to capitalism and the commitment to root out all remnants of it was of primary concern; it was not only an educational or economic necessity, but also a moral duty of all Soviet educators.

The American education system was criticized in the Soviet press for managing schools as if they were capitalist-style businesses. In this stream of propaganda, the underlying message regarding the conditions of teachers was that if the school was a business, the teacher was the exploited laborer in a capitalist industry. *The Teacher's Gazette* described the plight of the American teacher:

> The connection between the school authorities and the teachers fully copies the relationship between the all-powerful owner of the business and his employees. At the same time there does not exist any respect for the profession of the teacher, for the greater social mission of the teacher. "You serve in my unprofitable business, so you are worthless," – this is the way teachers are viewed by their employer.[131]

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[130] Topchii, "Ob Amerikanskoi 'traditsii' ekonomit' na obpazovanii i o polozhenii uchitel'stva v S.Sh.A."
[131] Nekrich, "Despotia biznesa."

The role of private property and the societal problems it was seen to cause, as viewed through a Communist lens, was a constant feature of Soviet educational propaganda at this time. Reportedly, a representative of the school board admitted,

> Too often members of the school administration view themselves as the keepers of the budget, specialists in the acquisition of products and the caretakers of property... all in terms of their own self-interests.[132]

Propaganda presented to teachers in the Soviet Union focused on the structural problems of capitalism as the primary reason for failures in the American system. This served to legitimize the Communist regime, and was a constant reminder of what was expected of teachers in the USSR. Criticism of the United States in the Soviet press could be easily translated into a lesson plan on economics in the classroom.

The Soviet media saw signs of progress in the United States, and often praised the work of organized labour. In the Soviet press it was reported that unionization and strikes in the United States by educators were essential to bring about progress. In many ways this reinforced the idea of Communism as a science, as a natural progression of all societies once the failure of capitalism was revealed. If the United States was continuing along a similar path towards Communism, the Soviet Union could also claim itself to be at a higher level of development, having already accomplished its socialist revolution. On the subject of organized labour and teachers, it was reported in *The Teacher's Gazette:*

> American teachers are not content with their position of half-slavery made unbearable and belittling by the fact that the teachers themselves are mostly filled with a feeling of self-worth and understanding of the importance of their profession within society. A great part of the American teachers are fighting and bit by bit begin to understand that only through a union with the working class and all the progressive elements of the country will they be able to overthrow the despotism of illiterate business within the schools of the USA.[133]

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[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.

Finally, the desperate conditions of the American teacher, as reported by the Soviet press, had equally dire effects on American students. According to educational reporter Fred Hechinger, American students, "know too little about too much."[134] Hechinger hoped to spur American legislators and the general public to action in education when he continued by pronouncing that, "The problem with this cultural drought is that a quart of water will not bring it back to life."[135] The Soviet press interpreted this remark as an acknowledgement of the failure of the capitalist system in the education of youth. The situation of American teachers and their students as portrayed by the Soviet media was summed up in Ivan Novikov's *Notes of a School Principal*: "the position of the teacher in the "civilized" West today calls to mind the blackest days under tsarism."[136]

The American Federation of Teachers and others concerns regarding education in the United States were freely (mis)quoted and manipulated in the Soviet press to achieve the desired results of the regime. The information that emerges through newspapers such as *The Teacher's Gazette* is often frustrating for researchers. There is no acknowledgement of the differences that existed between American and Soviet press. The Soviet media was a propaganda organ of the government, while in the United States there existed a much greater degree of journalistic freedom. It could be argued that many of the criticisms levelled against the American education system could easily be applied to the Soviet system. To be sure, however, one would not be able to quote a Soviet teacher lamenting the crippling bureaucracy of the state, lack of infrastructure, poor

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[134]Guschchin, "Iznanka Amerikanskoi sistemy prosveshchenuia."
[135]Ibid.
[136] Novikov, 29-30.

student achievement, and the extreme shortage of teachers in more remote locations of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet government aimed to rid the country of bourgeois influences through an aggressive campaign of slander that often focused on the low level of educational spending in the United States as compared to the USSR. The Soviet press delivered story after story detailing the financial crisis of American education, contrasted with the well-funded, inclusive, and successful schools of the Soviet Union. Reports of financial support for schools were an important propaganda tool for the Soviet government; levels of funding demonstrated the relative importance of an issue to a government and a nation in general. If the Soviet press could show that the American government cared very little about education, capitalism was further discredited and Communism appeared the benevolent and moral form of leadership.

The Soviet press made use of various statistics when comparing levels of spending on education in the United States and the Soviet Union. It was common for Soviet papers to compare the percentage of the national budget each nation spent on education. *The Teacher's Gazette* printed a report on the state of education in the United States in 1947:

> Government spending within the United States on public education is dismal, especially considering how the country got wealthy during the two world wars. The deputy government secretary of the United States (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs) Benton...stated the following facts. Benton said that the Soviet Union spends 7.5 percent of its national budget on education while the United States spends only 1.5 percent and England 3 percent. It should be added that in terms of the Soviet Union Benton used an incorrect number. In the budget of the USSR for 1947 the sum put aside for education exceeds 13 percent of all government revenue against 1.5 percent in USA and 3 percent in England.[137]

[137]Gushchin, "Iznanka Amerikanskoi sistemy prosveshchenuia."

Soviet officials continuously praised the government for its attention and focus to education, and used the supposedly dismal level of funding in the United States to bolster public opinion.[138] Ivan Novikov sang the praises of the Soviet government when he recounted the amount of public funds spent on education in the USSR:

> Over 59 billion rubles for education! Nearly 16 per cent of our entire state budget! To grasp the full significance of this figure, it is sufficient to recall that in the United States of America, one of the richest countries in the world, expenditures on public education since the war have amounted to about one percent of the national budget.[139]

There existed a focus on the apparent lack of funding for American schools, yet the Soviet press merely reported on education spending as a percentage of the national budget of the United States. Without the knowledge of the total spending on education, combined with an analysis of relative costs, the statistics often quoted within Soviet newspapers meant very little.

The Soviet press drew public attention to the structural problems of education in the United States. An effective method of vilifying the United States was to compare the levels of funding for education to funding provided for defence. The United States was to be portrayed as a country intent on beginning another world war, a nation that would stop at nothing in the pursuit of its imperialist ambitions. The United States was characterized as a capitalist regime that would campaign to achieve world domination, even if it was at the expense of the children of America. M.A. Suslov, Minister of Education and Culture in 1952, used statistics regarding spending levels in the United

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[138] It is very difficult for the researcher to actually compare levels of funding between the USSR and the United States. Following the war the Soviet currency was substantially devalued; in the United States education was largely the domain of the state, with funding coming from both national, state, and local governments it is difficult to accurately compare the two countries. However, this did not stop the Soviet press from insisting that the education system of the USSR was infinitely more adequately funded than its American counterpart.

[139] Novikov, 26.

States on education and defence as a clear indicator of American foreign policy and the danger the United States posed to the Soviet Union.

> While the Soviet state appropriates large funds every year for the development of public education, the government of the U.S.A., with a catastrophic situation in public education, appropriates for this purpose less than 1% of the budget. Yet 74% of the budget funds are appropriated in the current year for military expenditures involved in preparing for a new war. One per cent for public education and 74% for military expenditures! These figures give a convincing picture of the direction in which the antipopular policy of the U.S. ruling circles is aimed.[140]

An earlier article published in *The Teacher's Gazette* went so far as to directly connect the lack of funding for education with American capitalist expansion overseas. The Marshall Plan was a clear target of the Soviet media; it was characterized as an imperialist policy of the United States designed to undermine the independence and "democracy" of sovereign nations. The author recounted,

> In the Truman budget of political "Cold War," as was justifiably characterized by Henry Wallace; there was not enough for the needs of national education. However, there was enough money for defense in the name of the uncontrollable expansion of American imperialism, for the creation of a "world system of bases," for the support of the reactionary regimes in China, Greece, Turkey, and other countries.

The purpose of reporting statistics on American and Soviet spending on education was not only to demonstrate the commitment the Soviet government had made to the youth of the nation. Statistics were also a powerful medium that proved concerns about a new war initiated by the United States were justified. Statistics lent moral authority to the mission of the Soviet government as a benevolent and peaceful force in the world while reinforcing its primary role as educator and leader, both politically and morally. Reminding the youth and teachers of the Soviet Union of this fact was of paramount concern to the regime.

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[140] Gruliow, 204.

In an effort to rid permanently the Soviet Union of any capitalist or American sympathizers, the Soviet media sought to portray Americans and the capitalist system of government as morally bankrupt and inherently corrupt and evil. The Soviet media focused on specific problems in American society such as racial and sexual discrimination, the imperialist policies of the American government, lack of intellectual freedom in the United States, and the general failure of American education. The apparent social breakdown of the United States presented to Soviet citizens was intended to validate Soviet attempts at Communist expansion in Eastern Europe and abroad; the Soviet Union concentrated propaganda efforts on the moral authority necessary to govern and spread its influence. The most effective means of achieving this moral authority was to discredit the Soviet Union's largest rival: the United States. Soviet educational propaganda focused specifically on the moral characteristics of the opposing regimes, demonstrating the superiority of the Soviet system in each speech, review, or article printed in the USSR.

As part of the moral education of Soviet youth, students were often reminded of the freedom and equality the system of Communism afforded them in their daily lives. Soviet students and teachers were inundated with cautionary tales of the terrible inequalities that characterized the American experience. Sexual and racial discrimination within the United States were two areas that the Soviet press focussed on with particular enthusiasm. Soviet education journals were quick to compare the experience of Black Americans to minority groups in the USSR. It was often pointed out that the experience of Black Americans had remained static over time despite reported "gains" in American democracy, while in the Soviet Union the media stated that all ethnic groups within the

Union were afforded equal opportunities, and had achieved equality as a result of the socialist revolution of 1917. Of the status of literacy in the United States, *The Teacher's Gazette* reported,

> Vladimir Lenin, in the article "Russians and Negroes" written in 1913, described the level of literacy in the USA and czarist Russia. Of course, in the United States, this level was substantially higher. Illiteracy was only six percent in the white population...Six percent illiteracy rate was an admirable number for a democracy accounting almost two hundred years of existence. To this six percent we have to add the 43.5 percent illiteracy rate of blacks. Lenin finished his article by saying: "Shame on America for the state of Blacks!"...Over 30 years, illiteracy did not decrease in the United States. During the war more than 350 000 soldiers could not sign their own name, and instead used symbols. In the state of Louisiana illiteracy is more than 36 percent. Out of 48 states, racial discrimination takes place in 17 of them, which have the worst illiteracy rates.[141]

While reports of discrimination in the United States were generally true, the presentation of a Soviet society as "completely free" was more than simply idealistic on the part of the Soviet press. Accounts of sexual discrimination in the United States in Russian newspapers were equally inflammatory. *The Teacher's Gazette* reported on a young student featured in the American magazine *Look.* The Soviet media outlet recounted Kathy Flynn's aspirations, having graduated with honours form the University of Iowa, and the possibility of her achieving her goals in the United States:

> To the question what does she want to do now, Kathy Flynn answered very cutely that she was trained to be a teacher in a public school, but would like to work as a stewardess on passenger airplanes. Unfortunately this is only a dream for a girl with higher education. For this advantageous job they prefer outstandingly beautiful girls without any education and no intelligence.[142]

The very goals of American society are called into question by the Soviet media. From this report it is clear that superficial qualities such as beauty are valued; American society is patriarchal and educated women are not ensured of advancing their careers through

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[141] D. Zaslavskii, "Chemu uchit Amerikanskia shkola?" (What does the American school teach?), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta.* 26 October 1946.
[142] Ibid.

post-secondary training. Although Soviet society surely had similar problems of discrimination and inequality, they were not discussed in the Soviet press. In order to remove American influences from the USSR, the Soviet government used the media to portray American society as discriminatory, inherently unequal, and shallow.

Another focus of the Soviet media attacks on American society was what Soviet media outlets described as the "persecution of progressives" in the United States. This campaign, directed at exposing the supposed moral bankruptcy of the United States and the system of capitalism, focused rather ironically on what the Soviet press labelled "the lack of intellectual freedom in the U.S.A." Reports of academics forced out of positions in universities, mass firings of "progressive" teachers, and the infamous HUAC (House Committee on Un-American Activities) were commonplace in the Soviet press.

Supporters of the Progressive Party, and its leader Henry Wallace, were portrayed as the Communist vanguard in the United States, constantly facing persecution from the American government and capitalist leaders. The Soviet press did not need to look far for academics fired for their political beliefs in the United States at this time: Ralph Spitzer of Oregon, Herbert Phillips, Joseph Butterworth, and Ralph Gundlach, all of Washington State University, were released from their duties for expressly political reasons, namely support of the Progressive Party and general Communist sympathies.[143] Ralph Spitzer was so bold as to suggest that all scientific endeavours were controlled by non-scientific entities, whether they were capitalist interests or a Communist government. Seen as supporting the work of Soviet academic T.D. Lysenko, Spitzer was promptly

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[143] "UW Observes Anniversary of Canwell Hearings," *University of Washington*, Vol. 15, No. 12, 15 January 1998: http://depts.washington.edu/uweek/archives/1998.01.JAN_15/article6.html (accessed 21 February 2006).

relieved of his duties in the Chemistry department.[144] *The Teacher's Gazette* described the dire situation of intellectual freedom in the United States:

> There is a mass laying off of democratically inclined teachers – and members or supporters of the Communist party, the progressive party of Wallace, and everyone else who, in one form or another, dares to speak up against political terror within the country...The oppression within the USA once again shows the falsehood and hypocrisy of the American officials when they speak about "democracy" and "academic freedom" within the educational establishments in the 'country of the dollar'. Even the reactionary newspaper *The Daily Mirror* had to admit that the talk about "academic freedom" is nothing but a "full and absolute lie."[145]

While much of what the newspaper *The Teacher's Gazette* reported was true, there was less than equal coverage given to the lack of intellectual freedom enjoyed by Soviet academics. To read a Soviet newspaper, one would get the impression that the climate for Soviet academics was one of absolute freedom. Cleary, this was far from the truth. While the Soviet media may not have fabricated news stories on the firing of American educators, the omission of similar practices by their own government demonstrate that these articles were little more than anti-American propaganda aimed at further solidifying Soviet control and popular support through the explicit rejection of capitalism.

The labelling of a nation as "imperialist" in the Soviet media, as occurred regularly in the case of the United States, meant that country had political aspirations in opposition to the Soviet Union. Generally, "imperialism" characterized the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine, intervention in Korea, Greece and Turkey, and all general policies by the American government that intended to halt the spread of Communism. The rhetoric in the Soviet media is remarkably similar to anti-Communist propaganda in

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[144] Tom Bennett, "The "Red Scare" Comes to Corvallis," *Beaver Eclips: Oregon State University Alumni Association,* 11 January 2002: http://alumni.oregonstate.edu/eclips/carry/jan11_2002.html (accessed 17 February 2006).

[145] A. Smirnov, "Presledovanie progressivnykh pedagogov v S.Sh.A" (Persecution of progressive pedagogy in the USA), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 10 September 1949.

the United States. Each nation tried to portray the other as having "dangerous ambitions" and as being a general "threat to peace and democracy in the world." The purpose of this propaganda in both countries was to further legitimize their respective regimes by convincing their own citizens and the global community that each had the moral authority to govern. Many similar campaigns of public opinion have been waged since; the battle of good versus evil is rarely as simple as governments portray it to be. Particularly important in the post-war world was the acquisition of scientific knowledge that often had military consequences. The race for the knowledge of harnessing atomic energy is perhaps the most relevant example at this time. Once both the United States and the USSR had mastered the production of atomic weapons, the focus of each government was to convince its own citizens and the global community of its own peaceful intentions contrasted with the aggressive designs of its opponent. Concerning American and British military aspirations, *The Teacher's Gazette* reported:

> Even though the war ended a long time ago, the USA is not decommissioning the bases that it built all over the world; it is actually building more and more ground, naval and air bases. The USA and Great Britain have created united military headquarters with participating countries – creating an aggressive bloc which is currently busy formulating war plans, with nuclear build up being a fundamental part of these plans. It is surprising that with the current state of affairs the United States of America and Great Britain oppose any convention for eliminating nuclear weapons, preferring to keep their hands untied. It should be pointed out that civilized nations have already condemned the use of poisonous gases in war for use in exterminating large amounts of people and have banned their use. However, the governments of the USA and Great Britain will not agree to such a ban for atomic weapons and the use of such weapons designed aggressively for exterminating large numbers of people.[146]

The United States was not only using military means to spread its influence and control according to Soviet sources. Education was a powerful weapon that the

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[146]"Politika S.Sh.A. i Anglii napravlena na podgotovku novoi voiny" (Politics in the USA and England are geared toward preparing for a new war), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta,* 28 September 1949.

American government used to spread its capitalist, pro-war agenda. The Soviet press propagated the party's dictum to heighten vigilance among their citizens against American influences. In addition, if the American government was intent on spreading capitalist propaganda through education, it was only logical for the Soviet government to work equally as hard in disseminating the "truth." *The Teacher's Gazette* reported on the nature of the threat posed by the United States.

> The pedagogical expansion manifests itself in the systematic creation of American schools and establishments of higher education in the countries of South America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. These educational establishments turn into outposts of American "democracy" and active defenders of American ideology and American politics. They turn into hotspots of reactionism, causing direct and explicit pressure upon society in the countries where they are located.[147]

The Soviet Union was intent on appearing as simply reacting to American aggression. Soviet educational policies were portrayed in the USSR as peaceful, fair, and democratic, with American policies depicted as the opposite. The Soviet Union, and Joseph Stalin in particular, understood the role education would play in the battle for ideological and military supremacy in the post-war world. The Soviet Union left nothing to chance concerning education. Stalin summarized his position when he stated, "Education – it's a weapon, the effect of which is dependent upon who holds it in their hands, who they want to hit with that weapon."[148]

The final portion of the Soviet government's attack on the American system of government aimed at eliminating all remaining capitalist, western, or American sympathies Soviets may have harbored. It focused on demonstrating how and why the Soviet system was superior in the field of education. It was one thing to disparage

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[147] M. Bernshtein,"Pedagogicheskaia ekspansia S.Sh.A" (The pedagogical expansion of the USA), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 10 August 1949.
[148] V. Shevkin, "Vernyi sluga Amerikanskoi reaktsii" (The loyal servant, American reaction), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 18 October 1947.

constantly the American system using various statistics to demonstrate the poor state of schooling in the United States; figures demonstrating Soviet dedication to education meant little if a tangible result was not apparent. If the government could prove the superiority of Soviet education its political, economic, and military policies were justified. Achievements in mathematics and sciences in the USSR played a large role in this process.

There was a general focus in the Soviet media on the differences between capitalist and Communist science. The Soviet media criticized capitalist nations for their scientists' secretive discovery methods and individualistic desires to achieve fame and fortune. Soviet science was portrayed in the media as being a collective endeavor with the goal of furthering Communism for the benefit of all peoples. Communist scientists worked for the collective good while scientists from capitalist nations sought to keep their discoveries secret from their colleagues in the hopes of amassing personal fortunes. Thus, not only discoveries, but also the method and nature of scientific discovery, were politicized in the Soviet Union. This is a clear example of the Soviet government deliberately manipulating the media to demonstrate its moral and scientific superiority over capitalist nations. An article published in *Pravda* made clear the distinction between capitalist and Soviet science:

> The great October socialist revolution decidedly changed the social significance of our country's science. In the capitalist world science was and remains an important tool of the ruling class, which utilizes it for selfish purposes. In the land of the Soviets science is entirely directed toward serving the people, helping the national economy and fostering cultural progress.[149]

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[149] S.I Vavilov, "On Organized Discussion of Scientific Problems," *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. 2, No. 29 (*Pravda*, 7 Aug 1950, 2), 2 September 1950, 21.

As argued earlier, the cultural progress of science in the Soviet Union had much to do with T.D. Lysenko's work on genetics and the inheritance of acquired characteristics. Soviet science used Lysenko's dubious scientific "discoveries" to argue that characteristics an individual acquired within their lifetime could be passed to their offspring. The consequence of Lysenko's research was the supposed fulfillment of the Bolshevik prophecy of the new "Soviet Man." This process would progress more quickly if individuals had the ability to pass acquired characteristics on to his or her offspring. As Trotsky wrote, Communists believed that "Man will become immeasurably stronger, wiser and subtler; his body will become more harmonized, his movements more rhythmic, his voice more musical…The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx."[150] The claim that the economic and political system of Communism could contribute to a more highly evolved human being is highly suspect. Yet Soviet educational propaganda related to science and mathematics supported this theory. This is perhaps the clearest example of propaganda for the purpose of eliminating all remnants of bourgeois mentality from the Soviet consciousness. Communist society was not only more fair and just than capitalist systems; it actually produced genetically superior people.

For Soviet society to remain united, more or less, behind the Communist Party was a constant concern for the Soviet government. While popular opinion may not be as important in a one-party system as in a multi-party, democratic state, the government of the Soviet Union certainly went to great lengths to ensure that citizens of the USSR did not harbor any capitalist or western sympathies. The elimination of all remnants of

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[150] Lev Trotsky, as quoted in Ronald G. Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR, and the Successor States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 184.

capitalism in Soviet society was important to the government because strong opposition to imperialist, capitalist societies, whatever form it may have taken, could be justified as a moral imperative. Thus, education was tied to this endeavor; it was the stage upon which the government intended to remove bourgeois influences in Soviet Union. The youth would accept communal responsibility and sacrifice in the name of defeating the evil powers of capitalism and the glorification of the motherland.

Chapter 4: The Perpetuation of the Communist System

Moral and scientific/mathematical education were closely tied in the Soviet Union. One expressed purpose of this association was the strengthening of the centralized, Stalinist system of government entrenched in the Soviet Union following World War II. The transformation of society, as envisioned in Communist doctrine, was heavily reliant on public education. Propaganda campaigns directed at teachers and students hoped to maintain popular support for the Communist Party and its directives. However, if the Communist system of the Soviet Union were to survive, and even thrive in the post war world, education needed to be focused on more than the indoctrination of youth in Communist principles. The perpetuation of the Communist system depended on the Soviet education system to produce talented scientists, mathematicians, and engineers in addition to ideologues.

Mathematical and scientific education took centre stage in the battle for technological and military superiority between the United States and the USSR. Recurring themes in Soviet educational literature often focused on the role scientific and mathematical education played in determining the status of a nation. Constant attention was given to the need to reconcile differences between theoretical teachings and practical applications. This problem, described as the gap between mental and manual labour, was to be narrowed in Soviet schools. The scientific nature of Communism, and the natural progression of societies toward this end, was present in all aspects of Soviet curricula. Thus, the combination of moral education (*vospitanie*) and scientific/mathematical education was integral in the perpetuation of the Communist system in the Soviet Union.

The moral and intellectual objectives of the Soviet school system were made apparent in printed propaganda and sanctioned party lectures and speeches. It is clear that the Communist Party used education as a means to accelerate the national economy while continuing to promise spiritual growth for all who embraced Communism. M.A. Suslov, Minister of Education and Culture described the benefits of compulsory ten-year education:

> The achievement of universal compulsory ten-year education will also have a great influence on speeding the development of the national economy because the ranks of the working class will be supplemented by increasingly cultured and educated people capable of rapid and efficient application and development of modern technology.[151]

A Soviet educational pamphlet described the more intangible benefits of education in a Communist society.

> The Communist transformation of society is inseparably bound up with the education of the new man, in whom spiritual wealth, high ethical standards and perfect physical fitness must be harmoniously combined. The man of the Communist future will be free from the…characteristics bred by a system of exploitation: the selfishness of private ownership, the desire to live at the expense of other people's labour, philistinism, individualism, etc.[152]

Education in the Soviet Union was both an intellectual and moral issue with Communist morals inextricably tied to scientific and mathematical achievement.

The primary objective of Soviet schooling was to propel the Soviet Union past the United States in the area of military technology while maintaining strict control over the Soviet public. Mathematical and scientific education had to be couched within Communist propaganda to achieve the latter portion of the objective. The goals of education in the Soviet Union were directly tied to the prospect of progress. *The Teacher's Gazette* echoed this sentiment, restating Stalin's objective, "Not only to catch

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[151] Gruliow, 204.

[152] *Bringing Soviet Schools Still Closer to Life: Full Text of the Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,* 4.

up, but surpass in the near future the scientific achievements outside of our country."[153] A centrally planned economy and education system allowed the Communist government to modify quickly and efficiently the curricula to coincide with desired objectives. If difficulties were encountered in this process, the blame was laid squarely at the feet of teachers and school administrators.

Educators in the Soviet Union were responsible for transforming government directives into educational reality. Teachers were often criticized for presenting material in an overly theoretical manner that had no bearing on students' lived experiences. This criticism highlights the Soviet focus on practical and useful applications for scientific and mathematical knowledge. An article in *The Teacher's Gazette* lamented that,

> Extra-curricular work with our children has been left abandoned...The weak progress of field trips, in my opinion, reflects lack of preparation on the part of teachers. The teacher often does not know what interesting businesses are located in the area of his school, what they contain of value from a educational and growth point of view and how to tie basic science taught in schools with the scientific-technical specialization of a given business.[154]

It was important for the government of the Soviet Union to produce students whose skills were immediately transferable into specific jobs. The government could manipulate the curricula to suit the production needs of the union, ensuring a workforce that possessed the desired skills of the regime. School curricula mirrored the needs of centrally planned production quotas, allowing the Soviet government to precisely determine the types of workers desired with each five-year plan. The pitfalls of lags between educational supply and demand many capitalist nations experienced were to be avoided in the Soviet Union through careful planning and manipulation of educational goals.

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[153] V. Obral, "Nauka, tekhnika i deti" (Science, technology, and children), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 2 March 1946.
[154] Ibid.

The most widely discussed problem in mathematical and scientific education in the Soviet Union was the perceived gap between manual and mental labour and theoretical and practical applications of knowledge. Stalin and other leaders often discussed the attainment of pure Communism; they described a time when there would be no distinction between mental and manual labour. The gap between mental and manual labour was seen as a kind of hierarchy, like class, that was to be eliminated from Communist society. The new Soviet man was to have superior physical and intellectual abilities. As a result, there would be no need for the division of labour into mental and manual. In reality, the Soviet government possessed a workforce that was divided precisely along these lines. The government relied on education to ensure all workers had a minimum level of technological knowledge and supported official ideology. The eradication of the division between mental and manual labour as discussed in the Soviet press was related to increasing production and producing professionals who would allow the Soviet Union to keep pace with, and hopefully surpass, the United States.

All schooling, and knowledge in general in the Soviet Union, needed to fulfill one of two functions; it had to contribute to the strengthening of the central Communist system, or it functioned to increase technological/military progress in the battle for global supremacy. Knowledge of mathematical theory was of little value in the Soviet Union if it could not be applied to a specific process or method of production. While government rhetoric may have couched this belief in Communist propaganda that advocated the synthesis of mental and manual labour, it is clear the intended purpose was increased production and scientific discovery that would be useful in the competition with capitalist nations. *The Teacher's Gazette* often described the difficulties teachers and students

encountered when combining theoretical and practical knowledge. The problems that existed in mathematic and scientific education were of particular concern.

> On the exams for physics often there was found a gap between knowledge and real life. There was no knowledge of how to use physics instruments. One of the seventh graders, who was already a welder/plumber and a pipe layer, correctly explained as was described in the textbook, the workings of a connected vessel (process of water transfer). However, as surprising as it is, he was unable to describe the workings of a water tower. This can be explained by the fact that physics was learned through a 'chalk' process; the students saw the process described to them, but they did not practice it.[155]

Poor textbooks, substandard teacher training, and a lack of effort on the part of the ministry and teachers were blamed for the lack of synthesis between theory and practice in the classroom. Teachers' newspapers were used to encourage more practical methods of teaching and to remind the Soviet public of the enormous importance of achieving synthesis between manual and mental labour. While Marx may have envisioned this process as scientific discovery based on material reality rather than theoretical abstractions, the Soviet government hoped this propaganda campaign would simply produce scientific discoveries that would be useful for military purposes.

The Teacher's Gazette described the importance of mathematics for the union to Soviet teachers, "Mathematics are loved only by students who somehow have themselves realized its greater scientific-practical meaning, instinctively understand its logical beauty and power, targeted to the solving of practical questions of life, and understand that without math there cannot be any growth of human culture."[156] Yet, the Soviet government made it clear to its citizens that problems still existed in education that were preventing the nation from eradicating the gap between mental and manual labour. To illustrate the deficiencies in education, particularly in science and mathematics, *The*

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[155] "Delo bol'shoi gosudarstvennoi vazhnosti" (A matter of great national pride), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 19 June 1946.
[156] P. Glagolev, "Matematika i zhizhn'" (Mathematics and life), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 23 June 1949.

Teacher's Gazette reported on specific mathematical problems that failed to meet the standards of practical knowledge.

> Ten years ago, in 1939, in a widely used collection of arithmetical exercises for the fifth grade, there appeared a little exercise in which "25 diggers working six hours a day dug in 3.5 days a trench 3 meters long, 1.2 meters wide, and 1.5 meters deep"... Please calculate what is the average labour completed by each person? One hundredth of a cubic meter of earth an hour. These aren't diggers; these are regular loafers! And how could 25 diggers with shovels fit into an area of 3.5 square meters? They could not fit! The exercise in this form remained in the textbook year after year from one publication to another. Finally, after nine years, in the latest edition (1948) it was "fixed:" now there are five diggers with shovels tinkering around daily for 8 hours for 15 days total on the same area of 3.5 square meters but a meter and a half deeper toward the centre of the Earth. Efficiency of labour – one shovel full every hour and a half![157]

The Soviet government wanted mathematical problems to reflect 'real life' and be grounded in socialism. All aspects of the Soviet education system were not only to reflect Communist ideology, but were designed to perpetuate it. The content of scientific and mathematical education in the Soviet Union was directly tied to the regime's goal of strengthening the Communist system.

The focus of educational literature in the Soviet Union often centred on the great industrial and intellectual capacity of children. Children were portrayed as, and trained to be, loyal and industrious in the USSR. However, according to *The Teacher's Gazette*, the Ministry of Education, schools, and teachers often failed to assist Soviet children in achieving their potential. Articles described how children in the Soviet Union would spontaneously organize into collectives to achieve a certain goal. Yet children were often let down in organized activities meant to be provided in schools and various after-school groups within the community. *The Teacher's Gazette* described a children's collective that appeared in the town of Bucha, just north of Kyiv. The collective took the form of a

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[157] Ibid.

factory; throughout the summer months children participated willingly as "engineers" and "aviation specialists," among other mathematical and scientific-related positions within the model factory.[158] The author describes the innate productiveness and diligence demonstrated by the children; though the football team "Dynamo" practised nearby, the children always fulfilled their production goals. Yet, with the onset of the school year, the model factory dispersed, and children resumed classes. The authors of the article approached several of the children from the model factory to determine what similar out-of-school activities the children participated in during the school year.

> We talk with a student of the eight grade "B" of the 147th school, Mark Kyriandom, the previous "leader of the model airplane subdivision" of the pioneer "factory". With enthusiasm, Mark talks about how his "subdivision" built a large fuselage model of a plane with a gas engine this summer. It was received by a pilot who came to the camp and all of the pioneers stood breathless as they watched the model run down the runway and fly into the air above the "Luchisti." But about his school Mark repeats almost word for word what Boris said. Here there is not a single technical club. Mark studies courses on model aviation, but it has nothing to do with the school. The local Komsomol guided him into the courses. He goes there with another boy, Golitsman. Volodya Trofimov, one of the active members of the model aviation "subdivision" at the camp, would like very much to continue model aviation, but the local Komsomol did not send him to the model aviation classes and to go to the technical youth station is too far. The school has many other young boys who would like to participate in model aviation, but they also have nowhere to go.[159]

This article shows how Soviet children wished to be involved with technology and mathematical/scientific projects, and would do so spontaneously in a manner which was modelled on appropriate, exemplary, Communist behaviour.

The failure of ministry officials, local organizations, and teachers to provide adequate mathematical/scientific after-school programs was treated as a deviation from the tenets of Communism. The Soviet government used articles such as the one cited

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[158] I. Kostin, "Deti khotiat zanimat'sia tekhnikoi" (Children want to get involved with technology), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*, 2 November 1949.
[159] Ibid.

above to demonstrate the spontaneous nature of socialism in young children. If socialist tendencies were natural in young children, adults must be corrupted in some manner. In some way, bourgeois sympathies existed within them. The purpose of education was to nurture the natural desires of children; the Soviet government described these tendencies as loyalty, productivity and Communist. Children were the focus of the Soviet government because they represented a blank slate upon which Communist ideology could be impressed. Children were also a valuable resource because they could be educated to be loyal and productive members of society. Central planning allowed the government to determine the definition of productive and educated; for the Soviet government in the post-war era, scientific and mathematical education was most important. As a result, mathematical and scientific education were given moral qualities by the government to ensure an exponential increase in the number of mathematicians, engineers, scientists, and technicians in the Soviet Union.

Scientific and mathematical education played an important role in the perpetuation of the Communist system because it was used to justify the necessity and inevitability of a Communist way of life. The Soviet government used the education of youth and teachers as an opportunity to denounce publicly capitalist and western science and society using supposedly infallible Soviet scientific discoveries. Science and mathematics were portrayed in the Soviet Union and the United States as impartial, unprejudiced demonstrations of the superiority of their respective political and economic systems. In reality, there may not have been fields more fully inundated with propaganda and political rhetoric than science and mathematics.

Politically driven ideals infused into science in the Soviet Union did not simply function to explain the inevitability and superiority of the Communist system. The Soviet government aimed to use scientific discoveries to explain the very nature of organisms created within a Communist society. Soviet science hoped to demonstrate that a society working consciously towards Communism would control nature, heredity, and the direction of the evolution of all species. In the words of scientist I.V. Michurin, as reprinted in *The Teacher's Gazette*, "We cannot wait for the mercy of nature; taking it from her is our goal."[160] Soviet citizens were told that scientific knowledge in the USSR was so advanced that it would improve the nature of their offspring and prevent drought in the fields. This scientific propaganda was clearly directed at western scientists and their discoveries such as the "theory of genetic mutation." Articles in the Soviet press rebutted this theory by stating that, "According to the chromosome and mutation "theory" all new traits within an organism are created through unchanging, hereditary particles – genes, and is done through the random combination of these genes. But genes, as it is known, don't actually exist."[161] According to the Soviet academic Lysenko, "gene theory" was a result of bourgeois scientists' inability to understand the relationship between hereditary traits and the external environment.

Soviet teachers were exposed to the most complex ontological and epistemological arguments regarding Marxist science. In *The Teacher's Gazette* the article "Science: the Enemy of Chance" was presented in 1949. The article describes, in great detail, the relationship between chance and necessity in science. The article explained the purpose of science to Soviet teachers,

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[160] I. Kibovskii, "Nauka – vrag sluchainostei" (Science: the enemy of chance), *Uchitel'skaia Gazeta*. 12 November 1949.
[161] Ibid.

> The targets of science are the ties of necessity, but this inevitably leads to an understanding of chance, because "In the world there are no things which cannot be understood, there are only things which are not understood yet, but will be understood and studied through science and practice" (Stalin). Science cannot lean upon chance, upon separate even if connected random events, which have no meaning and no definition and are simply secondary connections. Science does not simply practice registration or describing of facts because that would lead it to empiricism and thus towards pure ritualism, religion. The goal of science is to distinguish between stable and meaningful connections from the quickly changing connections with no meaning, to predict the course of any development by looking beyond the secondary, unstable and random secondary connections towards the stable, necessary connections.[162]

Theoretical discussions regarding the purpose of science and other educational matters were commonplace in Soviet teachers' journals, and teachers were expected to keep abreast of these issues. Great expectations were placed upon the Soviet teacher; they were required to incorporate extremely complex theories of Marxist-Leninist science into every lesson. Teachers turned to educational newspapers to explain party ideology and methods for including Communist philosophy in their teachings, no matter how abstract, complex, or contradictory they may have appeared. Soviet society was described as predictable and stable; therefore Soviet science followed a similar model. Discussions of Soviet science were used to reassure the public that the government was following a reasonable path meant to further the advance of socialism. Soviet teachers were expected to explain this concept to their students.

However lofty and theoretical debates regarding science in Soviet teachers' newspapers began, arguments degenerated to a similar common denominator. Soviet science was superior to western, bourgeois science. Soviet society was moving deliberately toward Communism. Life in the USSR was immeasurably better as a result of the Stalinist government. Citizens, especially those who were charged with teaching

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[162] Ibid.

the next generation, were constantly reminded of the importance of their task and resultant duty to the party and nation. In the Soviet Union education was treated as seriously as scientific research because the government understood the potential benefits of producing generations of loyal citizens. The American education system could not hope to achieve such unanimity; local, state and federal governments all attempted to control what was taught in American classrooms with the result being curricula that varied widely between counties and states. However, with a centralized planning commission overseeing all aspects of Soviet curricula, and news agencies constantly printing requisite amounts of propaganda, the government hoped to produce an education system that would yield students capable in science and mathematics who understood the inherent benefits of the Communist system and corresponding evils of capitalism. The following article demonstrates how science and the Soviet system were inextricably tied, and repeats party propaganda intended to be taught to Soviet children.

> The dialectic laws exist "in chaos" of uncountable changes within nature, as well as in the seemingly random historical laws of human society. Every scientific discovery of laws (for example the discovery of new dependencies) allows us to consciously control the power of the surrounding reality, including the development of human life. For imperialistic bourgeoisie however, scientific progress is a speeding up of the death of capitalism. This scares the bourgeoisie and they do everything in their power to slow down the development of science or at least give it a one-sided goal, creating for them the preparation for the atomic war. In Soviet society chance and necessity exist in a new relationship. The true condition of existence finds its voice in the politically Bolshevik party in the Soviet state. In the USSR and in the countries of new democratic reconstruction life is led consciously, by a previously stated plan. No chance can change the path of our movement towards Communism. The basis of our society is a socialist method of production, in which social production is accompanied by social distribution of material goods. In Soviet society people consciously and successfully solve problems according to their understanding of the laws of the surrounding reality. For example, scientists actively interfere in the biological processes of nature, change organisms and control their development in the interest of socialist

> society... In Soviet society we ourselves create history according to the understanding of the laws of the surrounding reality.[163]

The notion of Communism as a science, and a scientifically proven method of governing, was very important for the perpetuation of the Communist system. With the exception of a brief period during World War II, the Communist Party remained staunchly atheist and actively worked for the demise of religion in Soviet society. Religion and ritualism, like the concept of chance, stated that there was much about the world that could not be known or controlled by man. Communist propaganda emphasized that "the unknown" as represented by religion was part of what allowed capitalism to continue. Bourgeois governments took advantage of people's beliefs in the divine in order to exploit them economically. The Communist government presented its economic and social programs for the nation as a solution to the problems of exploitation faced by workers in capitalist nations. Science was integral in education and Soviet propaganda because it offered something that religion often could not; tangible results. If the Soviet government announced that its scientists had invented the bomb, citizens could immediately witness the results. Photos of lush fields accompanied proclamations of the end of droughts in the fields. To each question asked by citizens, the Communist government had, or alleged it had, solutions that were reliable, logical, and guided by the scientific principles of Communism.

The Soviet government aimed to show that just as Communist science followed moral principles, Communist morals had their roots in science. Soviet propaganda campaigns following World War II sought to discredit the West, particularly the United States. To achieve this, the Soviet Union juxtaposed what it labelled "Communist" and

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[163] Ibid.

"bourgeois" morals. Allies praised by Stalin and the Soviet government just years before, Western nations were now portrayed, once again, as evil, imperialist empires. The Soviet government claimed that the United States and its allies delayed the opening of a second front and only fought alongside the Soviets to increase their power in Europe once it became clear the Red Army would be victorious. Following World War II Soviet newspapers claimed that Anglo-American imperialism in the Middle East, embodied by the creation of Israel, sought to refocus Arab frustration with the state of their economic and political conditions towards an ethnic and religious outlet. The creation of a Jewish state was a diversion from class tensions and was portrayed by the Soviet media as an attempt by the United States to quell revolution and maintain a political foothold in the Middle East.

Both nations waged propaganda campaigns through the media claiming that their nation had the "moral authority" to govern and extend influence. In the United States, leaders often referred to America's "godly mission" and emphasized the need for "good" to triumph over "evil." Communist rhetoric rejected religion and its notions of an unchanging concept of good and evil. Communist theory dictated that the ruling class controlled morality. In the Soviet Union the ruling class was supposedly the working class; in the United States it was said to be the bourgeoisie. Therefore, Soviet propaganda focused on the scientific nature of Communist morality. An article in *The Teacher's Gazette* described the amelioration of morals among the Soviet people as a result of a Communist economic system. Teachers were to recount to their students that by changing the mode of production through the Russian Revolution, the "animal" within

them would be replaced by humanity and altruism. Socialism would triumph through scientific morality.

> Over 100 years ago Belinsky said that the goal of education should always be to humanize the most limited and unchanging characters. Progress in the area of morality consists of replacing the animal within people with humanity. In this lies the core of Soviet morality, that it destroys the remains of old habits, replacing bourgeois lies and hypocrisy with socialist truthfulness, egotism and individualism with collectivism and friendship, jealousy with wisdom, creating a mass truth out of the socialist motto: "One for all and all for one." The animal habits remain within people not because it is their nature but because of the negative impact of social relations. With the destruction of these interactions the human character changes along with one's whole essence.[164]

The ultimate goal of any political party or regime is to maintain itself as the ruling elite. Whether that political party is located in a democratic country or not, all rulers rely on public support to some degree. The education system of the Soviet Union was designed to produce individuals who would assist in increasing the USSR's power and prestige on a global scale, while remaining loyal to the Communist Party and its principles. Thus, the central goal of the Soviet education system had to be both academic and ideological. The challenge of Soviet education was to instil political and ideological loyalty in its youngest members while desperately seeking individuals whose scientific discoveries needed to be revolutionary. Though it is probable that this paradox was lost on many citizens, the government's propaganda campaign sought to repress any obvious contradictions.

Following the Second World War, the Stalinist Soviet government found itself victorious in a battle that had cost the nation an estimated thirty million lives. The union's infrastructure had been badly damaged, yet the USSR had recently brokered a deal with America that would see the extension of the Soviet Union's political and

[164]Zis', "Moral' burzhuaznaia i moral' kommunisticheskaia."

economic power. If the world was to be dominated by two superpowers, the Soviet Union needed an aggressive plan to rebuild a devastated economy and achieve technical advances that would allow the country to compete with the United States, a nation that, with the exception of Pearl Harbor, had not experienced the devastation of conflict on its soil. The Soviet people made huge sacrifices in terms of quality of life and consumer goods in the coming years as was mandated by the central government. The promise of a brighter future for the Soviet Union was made through the channels of the education system. The perpetuation of the Communist system depended on the success of both mathematical/scientific and ideological educational endeavours in the post-war era. As a result, moral and ideological education was synthesized with necessary technical elements. The Soviet educational program aimed to produce highly trained citizens who supported the regime's political goals.

Conclusion

The goal of every education system is to produce citizens who will become contributing members of society as they mature. Each society and government will value different qualities in their members and choose to educate their young accordingly. The Soviet education system is likely the most openly partisan example scholars have to draw upon from the twentieth century. However, as historians and educational scholars we must remember that each education system, in every country, functions with a specific political agenda. Certainly lawmakers and policy leaders in the United States worked desperately to create an education system equal to that of the Soviet Union in technical training and propaganda supportive of the government. Rather, what is remarkable about the Soviet educational system following World War II was its effectiveness in bringing about massive increases in the amount and quality of mathematical and scientific knowledge Soviet students possessed. While problems with teacher training and infrastructure were often encountered in Soviet schools, the main goal of combining moral with mathematical and scientific education was achieved rather seamlessly. Central planning afforded the Soviet Union a great advantage in this realm. While American legislators and policy analysts disagreed concerning how to implement changes, what changes to make, and how to fund the revamped system, the Soviet government simply focused vast amounts of resources into producing teachers and professors who would teach the state-mandated curriculum. George Counts labelled this "the challenge of Soviet education." While increasing military costs and rapidly increasing salaries among workers paralysed the United States, the Soviet Union chose to focus a great portion of the central coffers on education. The challenge of Soviet

education was not then the seamless manner in which the state "brainwashed" its citizens, as many suggested at the time, but the ability of the centralized, Soviet government to change the function of education to suit the political and economic climate of the post-war world. The Soviet government was not directly responsible to an electorate who would judge its relative success or failure during the next election; democratic freedoms and parliamentary procedures were not required of the Soviet government. In large part, the inability of the American government to reform its educational practices in a timely manner allowed the Soviets to gain ground in scientific and mathematical education, and therefore, technology. The Soviet government demonstrated that resources must be directed to the areas in education that a government wishes to improve upon.

The success of the Soviet Union in reworking its mathematics and science curricula to better suit the post-war world is directly related to the propaganda with which mathematics and sciences were infused. The programs of morale building, the rejection of capitalism, and the perpetuation of the Communist system were successful because they were present in every aspect of the Soviet educational experience. The American education system also attempted to build morale, reject Communism, and perpetuate a chosen form of government. Yet, growth in scientific and mathematical education continued to lag behind that of the Soviets; education was not viewed as a patriotic duty and economic necessity in the United States. Certainly the Soviet Union was widely despised by a large number of American students, and indeed feared, but the education system in the United States seemed to have little response. Despite widespread fear of Communism, demonstrated aptly by HUAC, there was not a prevalent belief in the United States that education was the solution to the "Red Menace."

While the United States debated the future of their education system, the USSR focused on building morale among its young students. Soviet curricula were designed to show precisely how Soviet scientists, engineers and mathematicians were succeeding in surpassing discoveries in the west. The Soviet government had a specific plan, with concrete examples to be used in classrooms that demonstrated the superiority of the Soviet Union in science and mathematics. Morale was to be bolstered by recurring accounts of not only the superiority of Soviet discoveries, but also the collective nature by which they were made, and how they would contribute to the good of humanity. The example of the atomic bomb was common in Soviet educational literature. Teachers were to describe the achievement of the bomb by Soviet scientists working collectively, and teach children that this discovery would only be used for peaceful purposes (namely to defend the USSR against the USA), while America was using its similar discovery to prepare for a new world conflict. Soviet students were to take pride in their country's scientists for their intellect and prominence on the world stage and for their unwavering commitment to Communism. Countries often employ this technique in the education of youth; I recall being taught that Canada had been named the best place to live by the United Nations. The notion of being the best is a very powerful concept, especially for children. It allows governments to dismiss shortcomings and failures and request sacrifices from its population while maintaining its position as the pinnacle of democracy and science.[165] Clearly, morale was directly tied to science and mathematics in the Soviet Union for this purpose.

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[165] Indeed, there were many shortcomings in the Soviet system. Although changes to educational policy were made quickly and purposefully, Soviet citizens paid a dear price in their daily lives for the efficiency of a centrally planned government.

Another primary focus of education in the Soviet Union was to reject explicitly any and all capitalist and American influences present in Soviet society. The connection to moral education is obvious; the capitalist system existed to exploit the labour of workers, deny them of basic human rights, and to keep them perpetually in a state of servitude. The relation of mathematical and scientific education to this "exploitation" may not be quite as evident. Soviet educational literature focused on the poor conditions and general lack of respect American teachers experienced. Teachers in America were reportedly paid less than paperboys and had to submit to the whims and iron rule of the capitalist administrators of school districts who cared only about money and intended to operate schools as if they were businesses. Soviet teachers ought to pity their American colleagues who suffered under such terrible circumstances. In addition to the dire conditions of teachers, scientists at American colleges and universities experienced a complete lack of intellectual freedom according to Soviet reports. Those who favoured unpopular theories, notably the "theories" of Soviet academician Lysenko, were promptly removed from their positions with virtually no recourse. Of course, the Soviet system had a much less public method than HUAC for dealing with those who reportedly strayed from Communist principles. Propaganda regarding the lack of intellectual freedom was strikingly similar between the United States and the USSR. Both countries accused the other of the persecution of "free-thinking" individuals, and each claimed to be "the most democratic state on earth." Yet in the Soviet Union, the press wrote with <u>one</u> voice: that of the government. Soviet students had no choice but to reject capitalist influences (at least overtly); their livelihoods, and perhaps their lives, depended on it. This was strong motivation for adherence to Soviet rhetoric and policies. As a result, Soviet doctrine

regarding the dangers of capitalism was infused into all aspects of the Soviet curricula, particularly science and mathematics.

Perhaps the most important goal of every education system is the role it plays in perpetuating the political and economic system of a given country. Instability occurs when there exists conflict between these systems. Revolutionary groups seek to educate the masses to the benefits of their political program through illicit channels in the hope of garnering widespread popular support. The Soviet government recognized the enormous impact education would have on the survival of the Communist system. Following the Revolution, the Bolshevik Party erected countless schools across the Soviet Union. It was hoped that these schools would produce a new generation of literate individuals, a generation who would help the Soviet Union "catch-up" with the remainder of Europe. Very quickly, the new government realized the potential of these schools to spread Communist propaganda. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Soviet government worked diligently to educate an increasing proportion of its population. Though often isolated from the rest of the world politically and economically, the Soviet Union survived its first few decades. Following the World War II, a new challenge presented itself. The USSR had emerged victorious, and was working feverishly to increase its power and prestige by exerting its political and economic influence. To meet the technological demands of the post-war world, the Soviet Union needed to produce talented scientists, engineers and mathematicians. Unlike the United States, the USSR could not rely on high salaries and perks to attract foreign scientists; the Soviet Union would have to educate its own rising stars. Through a carefully constructed education

system the Soviet government envisioned the spread of global Communism and an increase in power and prestige for the USSR.

The main difficulty in studying educational policy as it relates to government propaganda is the question of the degree to which Soviet students internalized propaganda. Scholars may speculate on the greater or lesser degree of success of Soviet propaganda in education. In reality, it is impossible to know. The difficulty with writing on this period is the tendency to fall into one of two camps. Firstly, the "subjectivist" school which tends to assume that Soviet people had little capacity to imagine alternative ways of life. Secondly, the "resistance" school runs the risk of inventing a group of people who may not have existed.[166] This paper has not speculated on this issue. What is historical fact is the enormous amount of resources the Soviet government poured into education following World War II. Clearly, the Soviet government thought education to be the single most important endeavor for the union, and the government depended upon the success of its educational system to secure its status as a superpower in the years ahead.

William Benton, an American educational scholar, said of the Soviet Union that, "education and science are now the most powerful instruments and the only 'safe and sure' instruments toward the Soviet hope of world domination."[167] Benton likely wished to prompt lawmakers into acting in the interests of the American education system when he wrote these words; yet, on some level, they were literally true. The Soviet government believed that by combining mathematical and scientific education with a focus on Communist morals, ideologically sound and intellectually superior individuals could be

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[166] Hiroaki Kuromiya, "Re-examining Opposition under Stalin: Further Thoughts," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 56. No. 2 (March 2004): 309.
[167] Benton, vii.

produced. The link forged between education in science, mathematics and morals was vital for the survival of the Soviet Union. Success in education in the early post war years provided economic and political stability for the nation while offering an opportunity for social mobility for the most capable Soviet students.

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